

THE TIMES




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MONDAY

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by Christopher Reeves



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Author of Mary Bell book defends paying for collaboration



By JOANNA BALE

THE author of the forthcoming book about Mary Bell defended yesterday a controversial payment made to the child killer for her collaboration.

Gitta Sereny, a prizewinning biographer and journalist, said that unprecedented access to Ms Bell had helped her to produce a serious analysis of the reasons why children become killers, which can "only be in the public interest".

Ms Sereny, whose book, *Cries Unheard*, will be serialised in *The Times* from Saturday, said: "The purpose of the book is extremely serious. There is nothing sensation-

alist about it. It is an attempt to find out why this woman, as a child, committed two terrible acts and what her life has been like since.

"There are no excuses for what she did and she herself admits that, but it is an explanation we have never had before. It is important to have such knowledge and I hope it will encourage people to demand changes in the way some children are cared for."

Tony Blair has asked Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, to examine the implications of Ms Bell being paid for her collaboration amid speculative reports that she received £50,000 from Ms Sereny.

Ms Sereny said: "This figure has

been plucked from the air. Yes she did receive some money from me and I understand the feelings of the victims' families. However, it would have been an impossible project without her collaboration."

A Downing Street official said yesterday: "Mr Blair has asked Mr Straw to examine how the payment squares with the fact that Mary Bell has been able to have her privacy protected by injunctions. The Prime Minister is also concerned about the distress to the family of the two victims. Mr Blair is an MP from the North-east and this tragic story still has resonance there after all these years."

Last night the Home Office said

that one area Mr Straw is reviewing is the Proceeds of Crime Act, 1995, which allows courts to confiscate proceeds of crime up to six years after conviction.

Ms Bell, who killed two small boys when she was 11, was found guilty of manslaughter on the ground of diminished responsibility in 1968. She was granted anonymity by the state on her release from prison in 1980.

The parents of her victims, Martin Brown, four, and Brian Howe, three, have expressed their distress that she is being allowed to benefit from the book and have called for it to be banned. June Richardson and Eileen Howe, the mothers of the

dead boys, welcomed Mr Blair's intervention yesterday.

Mrs Richardson said: "This is just what we wanted the Government to do. Mary Bell cannot be allowed to profit from this horrid book and our aim is to get it banned, hopefully with Tony Blair's backing."

"We have both been distraught since talk of this book began. Eileen is not very well and this has had a terrible effect on her health. But knowing there are people who support us and do not want this book to go on sale gives us great encouragement and we find strength from that."

Bryan Roycroft, the former Director of Social Services in Newcastle

upon Tyne, who was a children's welfare officer at the time of the killings, has welcomed the book. He said: "I think Gitta Sereny is a responsible and sensitive investigative journalist and there is great value in getting Mary Bell's side of her story."

Mr Roycroft, who is now chairman of Age Concern in Newcastle, added: "It does not excuse or apologise for the killings, but it helps people to understand the background to the case, then I welcome it."

A Press Complaints Commission
Continued on page 2, col 4

Prince to target 40 areas in need

By ALEX FREAN

THE Prince of Wales is launching an unprecedented initiative, over the heads of politicians, to identify Britain's 40 most deprived areas and urge business leaders to make life there better.

In his own version of the Government's drive against social exclusion, the Prince will use a speech tomorrow to appeal directly to the social conscience of corporate leaders. He will also challenge them to accompany him on a series of "Seeing Is Believing" tours to witness first hand the problems faced in the country's most-needy communities.

The move heralds a departure for the Prince, who has coined the slogan "prosperous high streets need prosperous back streets", as he takes a more active role in attempting to improve the social and economic fabric of the nation. He has told researchers from his Business In The Community charity to identify the 40 locations — to be known as Regeneration Action Areas.

Although most of Britain's major corporations make regular donations to local charities and are involved in community projects, the Prince believes many could and should do more. "The real issue is, can you get companies to raise the quality of what they do in a community," a source close to the Prince said yesterday.

"The largest companies don't do enough to drive community investment through all of their businesses. Other companies just don't manage



Marathon winners: Catherina McKiernan of Ireland and Abel Anton of Spain who narrowly missed a race record

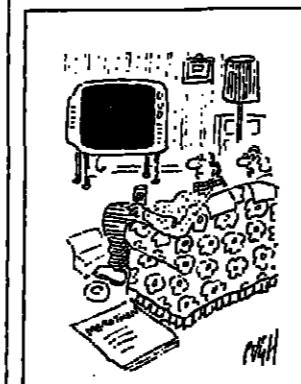
Waves cost winner a bonus

By JOHN GOODBODY, SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

THE Spanish world champion, Abel Anton, waved goodbye to a cheque for £15,625 yesterday as he responded to the cheering crowds in winning the Flora London Marathon.

He broke his stride four times to salute the massed crowd along The Mall as he sprinted to victory, but his gestures cost him the bonus for setting a race record.

The 35-year-old Spaniard headed a record number of 30,663 starters, who were expected to raise about £15 million for charity. He clocked 2 hours 7 minutes 57 seconds, only two seconds slower than



Well, one of us has got to walk over and turn the TV on...

the previous best set by Antonio Pinto of Portugal last year. Afterwards Anton said: "I was so happy to win that I never thought about any kind of money. Now I have cooled down I might think about it, and when I am 60 years old I will certainly think about it."

Even so, first place — ten seconds clear of Abdel Khader Mouaziz of Morocco — earned the Spaniard £50,000.

More than 500 of the entries, including 23 specially selected readers of *The Times*, were members of Team Flora raising money for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. They were led by Chris

Moon, who lost an arm and a leg clearing mines in Mozambique, and yesterday did his best ever for the distance of 4 hours 36 minutes.

Runners for the Memorial Fund were expected to raise about £5 million.

The women's race was won by Catherina McKiernan of Ireland who beat Liz McColgan of Scotland, after pulling away at 21 miles.

The event was preceded by the *Times* mini-Marathon, in which nearly 3,000 children took part in a 2.8 mile race.

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Spain Ptas 350, Sweden Sfr 25.00,
Switzerland Sfr 25.00, USA \$3.50,
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MCC is braced for testing time over women members

By ADRIAN LEE

THE MCC is preparing for a fiery annual meeting next week when it announces a plan to resolve the dispute over women members.

Colin Ingleby-Mackenzie, the MCC President, said yesterday that a fresh ballot could be held this year on admitting women. Wavering opponents would be lured with the concession of a bar for men only in the Lord's pavilion.

Another move will be the proposal that women guests are admitted to the pavilion for some matches this season so that members become used to the idea of change.

Opponents said they were

Carey lays down Rome challenge

The Archbishop of Canterbury last night called for the Roman Catholic Church to abandon its ruling that forbids Protestants from receiving communion in its churches. Dr George Carey said that no church could claim ownership of the sacrament. Page 3

Toxic leak inquiry is demanded

By OUR FOREIGN STAFF

Isabel Tocino, the Spanish Environment Minister, has called on police to investigate the release of highly toxic water from a mine that threatens the most important nature reserve in western Europe.

Anders Bulow, president of the Toronto company that owns the mine, expressed his regret. His company was doing all it could to limit the impact.

Greenpeace challenged the Spanish authorities' claims that emergency dykes had averted the threat to the Coto de Doñaña reserve.

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Safety review demanded as nuclear police chief quits

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

ENVIRONMENTAL groups and MPs yesterday called for an urgent review of security at nuclear installations after the policeman in charge of guarding the sites resigned in a dispute over manpower.

Days after an outcry over the Government's decision to accept high-grade plutonium from Georgia to Dounreay for storage, ministers face questions this week over a

dispute between Tony Pointer, the Chief Constable of the UK Atomic Energy Authority Constabulary, and nuclear industry executives about extra officers for the plant.

Yesterday, Friends of the Earth said that Mr Pointer's resignation highlighted alarming fundamental problems. Dominick Jenkins, spokesman for the environmental group, said: "The public can't feel safe when the top nuclear cop is signalling red for danger."

Roseanna Cunningham, the Scot-

tish National Party's environment spokeswoman, said that Mr Pointer presented his findings to the police authority in January and it was outrageous the public was kept ignorant of a vital security matter.

She asked: "Why wasn't this information in the public domain last week, when the entire justification given by the Government for the removal of the Georgian nuclear material to Dounreay was the plant's security?"

Yesterday the industry's security

watchdog, the Directorate of Civil Nuclear Security, nuclear companies and the Department of Trade and Industry denied that any of the eight installations was at risk and said that eventually Mr Pointer had been given the officers he wanted. They said he expressed satisfaction at the decision but still decided to leave his £77,000 job this week.

Mr Pointer, 54, said yesterday that he would not enter into a public debate with the authority. His force of 480 officers was "an excellent one

and the public can be assured that these sites are in safe hands with the police, providing they are properly funded and resourced".

The force costs £17 million a year. All officers are armed and they can operate within a 25 mile radius of any site. They are paid for by the three nuclear industry companies using the facilities.

The dispute began with an argument over budget levels and manning. Mr Pointer is understood to have accused the authority of failing

to act on warnings that Dounreay and other sites could be vulnerable. A series of exercises simulating terrorist attacks underlined the risks.

Yesterday John McKeown, the authority's chief executive, said that there was a debate over levels of manning. After Mr Pointer announced his resignation, the levels were increased and he confirmed his agreement with them. Mr McKeown said that Mr Pointer was asked to withdraw his resignation.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Waiting list war hits blood supplies

Supplies of blood are running dangerously low as hospitals set about cutting waiting lists, the Blood Transfusion Service said last night. Stocks have fallen in a week from 16,000 to 14,000 units, only 1,000 above the level at which non-urgent operations would have to be cancelled. The service is launching a radio advertising campaign today to try to recruit donors urgently.

"The start of the new financial year means that hospitals have money available to carry out operations so they are trying to reduce their waiting lists," a spokesman said. "This means they are using far more blood than usual at a time when stocks tend to be lower because of the Easter and Spring Bank Holidays."

Shortages have been most acute in the Midlands and South West, so the service is planning to shift blood there from the London area where there are adequate supplies at present. The common O and A groups are needed most.

"We hope to maintain supplies everywhere above the level where operations would have to be cancelled, but we do need donors urgently if we are to do that," the spokesman said. "The high demand for operations to cut the waiting lists makes it more difficult to be sure."

There are 1.9 registered donors, who between them provide 2.4 million units a year.

Diet linked to Alzheimer's

A poor diet could be one of the factors that causes Alzheimer's disease, which affects 500,000 people in Britain alone. Research to be published today reveals that Alzheimer's sufferers have a high level of homocysteine in their blood. This is a chemical by-product that increases when the diet is low in vitamin B12 and folic acid.

Woman's body at army barracks

The body of a woman was discovered at the Cawdor barracks of the 14th Signals (Electronic Warfare) Regiment in Wales yesterday. Five local people unconnected with the military have been arrested on suspicion of supplying controlled drugs to the woman, Katie Wright, 19, a civilian, from Pen-y-Cwm, near Haverfordwest.

Straw targets youth crime

Jack Straw is drawing up proposals to stop young men turning to crime in their late teens. The Home Secretary is focusing on the 16-to-18 group who have left school but are not eligible for Labour's New Deal for the jobless. Figures suggest that boys who commit offences in their teens are more likely to go on offending in their twenties.

Counselling 'may be harmful'

Counselling and debriefing victims of disasters and accidents is ineffective and causing real harm to many, the British Psychological Society was told this weekend. Those with serious injuries can suffer greater mental trauma if they are asked to relive their experiences too soon, members were told at a conference on counselling techniques.

Minister denies DUP claims of army pull-out

BY AUDREY MAGEE AND JILL SHERMAN

THE Government moved last night to defuse a dispute in Northern Ireland over claims by Ian Paisley's Democratic Unionist Party that British troops would start moving out of the Province and dismantling army bases as early as October.

The DUP claimed yesterday that it had seen a confidential security force document outlining future plans and listing the timescale for a wave of withdrawals and base closures over the next three years. The document made clear withdrawal would only start if Ulster voted "yes" in next month's referendum on the Northern Ireland peace agreement.

But last night George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, acted swiftly to dismiss the reports outright. "There is no truth in the suggestion that the Government is planning to withdraw army units from Northern Ireland," Mr Robertson said. "The Army will continue to provide whatever level of support is required by the RUC for as long as necessary."

The DUP, which is vehemently opposed to a yes vote, refused to release the document or say where it had come from. But government sources claimed that they had no knowledge of the document and refused to comment on it until it had been published by the DUP. "Unless we see the document we are not prepared to give it credence," a Ministry of Defence spokesman said.

Downing Street also dis-

missed the report insisting that the Army would remain in Northern Ireland as long as the police wanted it to remain.

It was suggested that there would be no withdrawal of troops until there had been a permanent cessation of terrorist violence and genuine peace in the Province, which would take some time to assess, "much longer than October".

But yesterday DUP members were determined to use the document as ammunition for its campaign for a no vote. The dispute threatens to overshadow today's meeting between the Prime Minister and Gerry Adams, the Sinn Féin leader, at Downing Street to discuss the agreement.

"They are talking about the whole lot going in less than three years," Ian Paisley Jr said.

He claimed that the document said base dismantling was part of a process of "irreversible change" discussed at a military conference on April 17 and that Lieutenant General Sir Rupert Smith, the army commander in Northern Ireland, has decided a yes vote would herald the end of the Army's operation role.

Peter Robinson of the DUP showed the document to his party colleagues at a meeting in Coleraine. They claim it is authentic as it is marked "restricted" and was leaked by some party sympathisers in the Northern Ireland Office.

An army spokesman said that they could not comment unless they saw the document

in the hands of the DUP. However, army sources indicated it would take more than a yes vote to get them to leave. One admitted withdrawal was possible: "If a proper peace should be established and the terrorist threat completely removed, it is unlikely there would be a requirement for all security forces."

There are some 17,000 troops in Northern Ireland and in the past it has always been stated by the Army that even in the event of a total ending of terrorism some thousands would stay, if only because there was little space in Britain to accommodate all the soldiers.

The claim is one of numerous being made by the DUP as it increases its campaign of opposition against the peace agreement signed in Belfast on Good Friday. Dr Paisley, the party leader, is considering whether to engage in a live television debate with David Trimble, leader of the rival UUP who is pushing for a yes vote, which will have an impact on the referendum of the Northern Ireland agreement. The two men have been approached by Ulster Television to participate in the showdown.

Mr Trimble will be trying desperately hard to persuade Northern Ireland's Protestant population that he will be able to preserve the union with Britain if people vote for the referendum. Dr Paisley will tell voters that the union can only survive if they vote against the agreement.

Celebrated biographer with proven track record

GITTA SERENY is a distinguished journalist and biographer.

Her last book, *Albert Speer: His Battle with Truth*, about Hitler's architect and armaments minister, won the 1995 James Tait Black Biography Prize and the 1995 Duff Cooper Award, and was shortlisted for the 1995 Whitbread Biography Prize and the 1995 British Book Awards Book of the Year.

She has also written *Into That Darkness*, on Franz Stangl, commandant of the Treblinka death camp, which has been adapted for the stage.

The Invisible Children investigated the lives of child prostitutes in America, Germany and Britain.

Her 1972 book, *The Case of Mary Bell*, was the definitive account of Bell's killings, written while she was still a child in a secure home.

Sereny has also written extensively for *The Times*, *The Sunday Times*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Magazine*, *The New York Times* and *The New York Review of Books*.

Born in Vienna, she and her husband, a photographer, live in London.



Gitta Sereny: her last book won two awards and was shortlisted for two others

Mary Bell author defends cash deal

Continued from page 1

official said that the public interest of the book could justify the payment made to Ms Bell if there was ever a complaint that she had been paid indirectly by a newspaper through serialisation rights. The official said: "We have not received a complaint but if we do, then we will examine the extent of the book's public interest."

Mark Stephens, a leading media lawyer, said that the book, which is due to be published on May 7, would have a strong public interest defence. He said: "Books

like this would never come into the public domain if it were not for the fact that people like Mary Bell are paid to collaborate. They do contain information that the public has a right to know."

Lynda Lee-Potter, the columnist, has also called for the book to be published. Writing in the *Daily Mail* last week, she said: "The book, I predict, will be neither sensational nor a whitewash. But it will enlighten [us] about the capacity for evil in children and the effect of their own sometimes terrible childhoods."

Ms Bell, 41, grew up in the Scotswood

slum area of Newcastle with her prostitute mother and her drunken petty criminal father. In 1968 she asphyxiated Martin Brown. Four days later she knocked on his parents' door and asked to see him in his coffin. Her letters of confession were dismissed by the police as pranks.

Two months later she strangled Brian Howe and tried to carve initials on his body. She was caught after being implicated by her friend Norma Bell.

Leading article, page 23

Straw pledges to review sentencing

BY JOANNA BALE

PROPOSALS to keep dangerous criminals behind bars for an indeterminate period are likely to be considered by the Government next year, the Home Secretary disclosed yesterday.

Jack Straw signalled the move as he condemned last week's riot outside a Bristol police station where it was believed the child sex killer Sidney Cooke was being held.

Speaking on BBC's *Breakfast with Frost*, Mr Straw said that the Government intended to look at "probably for next year, the idea of indeterminate sentences for those who are dangerous people, like Cooke, but who are not within the mental health system".

On the violence in Bristol, Mr Straw said: "I understand the concern people have about paedophiles. But there is abso-

lutely no excuse whatever for this kind of disgraceful behaviour, particularly where it is directed against the police who are the very people who are there to protect the community from paedophiles."

He also reaffirmed the Government's determination to bring in measures to increase supervision of offenders such as Cooke. He highlighted the proposed Sex Offenders Order, in the Crime and Disorder Bill, which has almost completed its passage into law and reaches its committee stage in the Commons tomorrow.

He said: "Someone like Sidney Cooke who is on the Sex Offenders Register anyway, could be subject to one of these Sex Offender Orders and that would lay down controls over him."

MPs will be asked views on voting by fingerprint

BY JILL SHERMAN, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PROPOSALS to require MPs to vote by fingerprint instead of going through the House of Commons division lobbies are to be sent this week to all backbenchers.

MPs will be given options on methods of voting, including the status quo, swipe cards, electronic fingerprinting, or a handheld machine.

The consultation exercise follows a split on the Commons Modernisation Committee over whether to go ahead with changing the archaic and lengthy system of trooping through the lobbies and being checked by clerks.

Most of the longstanding Tory MPs on the committee are adamantly opposed to change and argue that it is just an idea being promoted by young Labour women MPs

who think they should spend more time at their desk or with their children.

But Labour MPs argue that it is high time to change a procedure that is cumbersome and inefficient.

The Tories claim that many of the 1997 intake are concerned about "brushing shoulders with men who smell of alcohol" and want to avoid turning up at the Commons as much as possible. They insist that new voting procedures will be costly and will not save any time. They also argue that several MPs, including Labour backbenchers, will object to fingerprinting on the ground of civil liberties.

"Can you imagine Sir Edward Heath or Sir Richard Body subjecting themselves to a fingerprint test?" one Tory

said. Moves to modernise voting procedures are also being resisted by the Labour whips' office. But several new Labour MPs are still pushing the idea, and Ann Taylor, Leader of the Commons, is said to be sympathetic to some change in the voting system.

All members of the Labour-dominated committee have decided against remote-control voting where MPs could vote in their rooms or even constituencies. Mrs Taylor has previously argued that it is important for all MPs to have access to ministers and senior backbenchers.

One member of the committee suggested that the most likely option was a smart card system, where MPs would be able to vote in the members' lobby or in areas close by.

Author sees red over Orange list

BY ALAN HAMILTON

A NOBEL Prize-winning author has ordered her name to be removed from the list of contenders for a leading British literary prize because the award is restricted to women.

Nadine Gordimer, the 74-year-old South African novelist, sent a message to judges asking them not to consider her latest work, *The House Gun*, when she heard that it was a possible contender for the £30,000 Orange Prize, sponsored by a mobile telephone company.

Ms Gordimer, author of 21 books and one of only seven women to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, indicated that she did not wish to be judged on gender. She joins other women authors, including Anita Brookner and Ruth Rendell, who in previous years have refused to allow

their work to be considered. Sheena McDonald, chair of judges for the prize, said that Ms Gordimer's book had not been submitted by her British publishers, Bloomsbury, but the judges had called it in for consideration, unaware of its author's views.

"I have great admiration for her, but this is her decision: we called the book in in good faith, but she did not want it to go any further. It was a misunderstanding," Ms McDonald said. "It is a pity, as the award is not just a way of celebrating women writers; it's not women versus men. There is a lot of fiction written by women which needs to be highlighted."

Ms Gordimer's latest novel is an account of urban violence and tensions in post-apartheid South Africa.

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Break bread with us, Carey tells Catholics

Ruth Gledhill on sharing a 'gracious gift from God'

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, stepped into a theological minefield last night when he called for the Roman Catholic Church to abandon its ruling that forbids Protestants from receiving communion in its churches.

Dr Carey, referring to communion as "the Lord's supper", said no church could claim ownership of the sacrament. Preaching in a Catholic cathedral, Dr Carey said the Church of England regularly invited baptised members of other churches to receive communion. This was "a reminder that the Eucharist does not belong to us, we do not own it", he said. "Rather, it is a gracious gift from God."

Dr Carey was preaching at an ecumenical service of vespers in Luxembourg's Catholic cathedral. He is in the area for four days as the guest of the Archbishop Fernand Franck of Luxembourg, a Catholic.

Dr Carey referred to the "pain and hurt" felt by Christians in a mixed marriage with a Catholic when they cannot share communion "at deep moments of joy, celebration, sadness and despair". This pain, caused by divisions from the past, could in the long term be damaging, he said. "It hurts to be denied the Lord's supper by a fellow disciple of Jesus Christ."

The Catholic church forbids its members from receiving communion in non-Catholic churches and also refuses communion in its own churches to non-Catholics.



Carey, guest of Catholic bishop

Rare exceptions are made, such as mixed marriage ceremonies between a Catholic and non-Catholic Christian, when the bride and groom might be allowed just once, at their wedding, to take communion together.

But that facility is denied to the non-Catholic guests at the same ceremony and also to the non-Catholic spouse at subsequent Masses.

Catholic tradition has been challenged recently in a number of high-profile cases. Mary McAleese, the President of Ireland, who is Catholic, aroused controversy when she openly received communion in Dublin's Anglican Christ Church cathedral.

Tony Blair, an Anglican who is married to a Catholic, was recently asked to desist from receiving communion at his wife's Catholic church. President Clinton, a Baptist,

on his recent visit to South Africa took communion in a Roman Catholic church in Soweto.

In Catholic doctrine, the eucharist is a re-enactment of Christ's sacrifice. Catholics believe the substances of the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. Catholic doctrine holds that the Eucharist in Protestant churches is invalid.

Some Protestants, such as those on the High Church wing of the Church of England, take the Catholic view of the Eucharist. But others believe the Eucharist is a memorial, with the bread and wine as symbols of the body and blood of Christ.

A previous Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Coggan, appealed for shared communion when preaching in the American episcopal church in Rome in 1977 when he visited Pope Paul VI. But the prospect seems even less likely now than it did then because the Church of England has since agreed to the ordination of women priests, a step regarded as beyond the pale in Rome.

In his sermon, Dr Carey said: "In my tradition we regularly invite those who are baptised and full members of other Christian churches to receive eucharistic hospitality on occasions as we receive it from them. I know that this extension of eucharistic hospitality is not normally the practice of the Roman Catholic church." Any extension would have to be worked out with the agreement of the ecumenical bodies concerned.

Bishops to debate the virtues of polygamy

CHURCH of England bishops are to debate an Anglican Church report arguing that polygamous marriages can sometimes show both "faithfulness and righteousness".

The report, to the 750 bishops and archbishops of the worldwide church, also argues in favour of permitting some Anglicans to have children outside wedlock.

It takes a liberal stance on homosexuality, acknowledging that there are many examples of faithful homosexual relationships within the Church as well as society at large. A faithful homosexual relationship need not be "inherently sinful", it says.

The report also addresses the euthanasia debate, noting that Christians believe there is life after death and argues against "clinging pointlessly" to life. The goals of medicine are to "relieve suffering", not simply to extend physical life.

The 24-page report, *Called to Full Humanity*, is certain to arouse fierce controversy when it is debated this summer. The paper has been written by the Most Rev Njongonkulu Ndungane, who is Desmond Tutu's successor as Archbishop of Cape Town. The report, which has been

Ruth Gledhill on the liberal stance of an archbishop

posted on the Internet, is at the top of the agenda of the Lambeth Conference, the meeting of the bishops and archbishops of the Anglican communion that takes place every ten years.

The conference, in July and August at Kent University in Canterbury, is expected to be the strongest test to date of the leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, *primus inter pares* or "first among equals" of all the bishops attending. Protests are being planned by the homosexual lobby.

On the issue of sexuality, the report says: "It has long been recognised in the Anglican communion that polygamy in parts of Africa, and traditional marriage, do genuinely have features of both faithfulness and righteousness." By "traditional marriage", the report is referring to the practice where

a man will impregnate a woman and have children by her before he will agree to marry her.

The report continues: "In addition, there seem to have been many examples of faithfulness and righteousness among those who have remarried after divorce. An increasing number of Anglicans also maintain that faithful homosexuality contains features of both faithfulness and righteousness."

The report acknowledges the "enormous challenges" church leaders are facing to their traditional teaching on sexuality throughout the world. It lists as inherently sinful practices such as promiscuity, adultery, prostitution, and child pornography. But homosexuality is excluded from the list of sinful practices.

The report reserves some of its strongest criticism for new technologies. Globalisation through technology is "destructive" of local cultures and widening the gap between rich and poor, it says. "Television networks such as CNN have become so dominant in many parts of the world that there is a resulting transfer of the networks' own values to the rest of the world," it says.

Marathon man's proposal encounters a 26-mile hitch

By Victoria Fletcher

A MEMBER of the Times Flora team running to raise money for the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund in the London Marathon experienced an unusually grueling 26 miles. He proposed to his girlfriend before the start but had to wait until the finish for an answer.

John Anderson, 61, went down on bended knee at 9.30am before his girlfriend Kim Wilkie, 41. Miss Wilkie, however, decided to contemplate the offer properly. "I just

felt so nervous that I didn't know what to do. There is a big age difference between us and although it doesn't matter, we had both been married before which makes you much more cautious," she said. So she sent her worried suitor off, promising to have made the decision by the time he reached the finish.

Mr Anderson, the head catering lecturer at Gloucester College of Art and Technology, met Miss Wilkie, an administration officer at Gloucestershire County Council, last April at a Jazz

Jive dancing class. Mr Anderson, who has run the London marathon 12 times, admitted that yesterday's race was one of the hardest: "I ran a really bad time, over four hours, because I was so preoccupied thinking about what Kim would say. The whole 26 miles really hurt."

Miss Wilkie fought her way to the finish to wait for him: "I was feeling sick all day, really full of butterflies knowing I had to say finally when he crossed the line," she said.

As the four-hour barrier came and went, Mr Anderson had not appeared at the finish. Then, after almost four and a half hours, John appeared round the final corner. A relieved Kim jumped past security guards and through the barrier and flung her arms around him. Then came the quiet but firm answer John had run 26 miles to hear: "Yes."

"We may wait until December for the wedding," she said. "But we are thinking of a honeymoon in Barbados. Apparently there is a marathon there in December, so John will be happy!"



Yes: John Anderson and Kim Wilkie at the finish line



Facing the music: Mac Okamoto at home with his wife, Olivia. He said she had threatened to leave him after reading about the case

By Alan Hamilton

THE Japanese businessman who allegedly said British women were "bloody fat pigs" with legs like tree trunks was doing his best to placate his English wife yesterday.

Mac Okamoto, the European head of the Shirayama Shokusan corporation, admitted that an industrial tribunal last week, in which a former employee accused him of making racial and sexual comments, had caused his family considerable embarrassment, and he hoped they could forgive him.

Mr Okamoto, 48, was speaking to reporters at his home at Kew, West

English wife shows Japanese boss who is master at home

London, with his wife, Olivia, 49. Mrs Okamoto was reluctant to discuss the matter, but her husband was voluble. He admitted that his wife had threatened to leave him after reading reports of the case. "She was

in Paris at the time, so she couldn't throw anything at me. But we did have an argument over the phone and I could hear her throwing things. There was a lot of loud smashing going on," Mr Okamoto said. He

added that Lisa-Jane Station, who brought the discrimination case, had portrayed him as someone who hated the English and their culture. "It's all rubbish, not just the stuff about Diana having a big nose, but other things she said I have said. I never said to anyone that English women were fat pigs; I never used that word."

Mr Okamoto also denied ever saying that all English women had legs like tree trunks. "My wife is 49 and has quite slim legs," he said.

Mrs Okamoto did not appear to be entirely bowled over with battery. Donning a pair of dark glasses, she announced in brisk tones that she was going shopping.

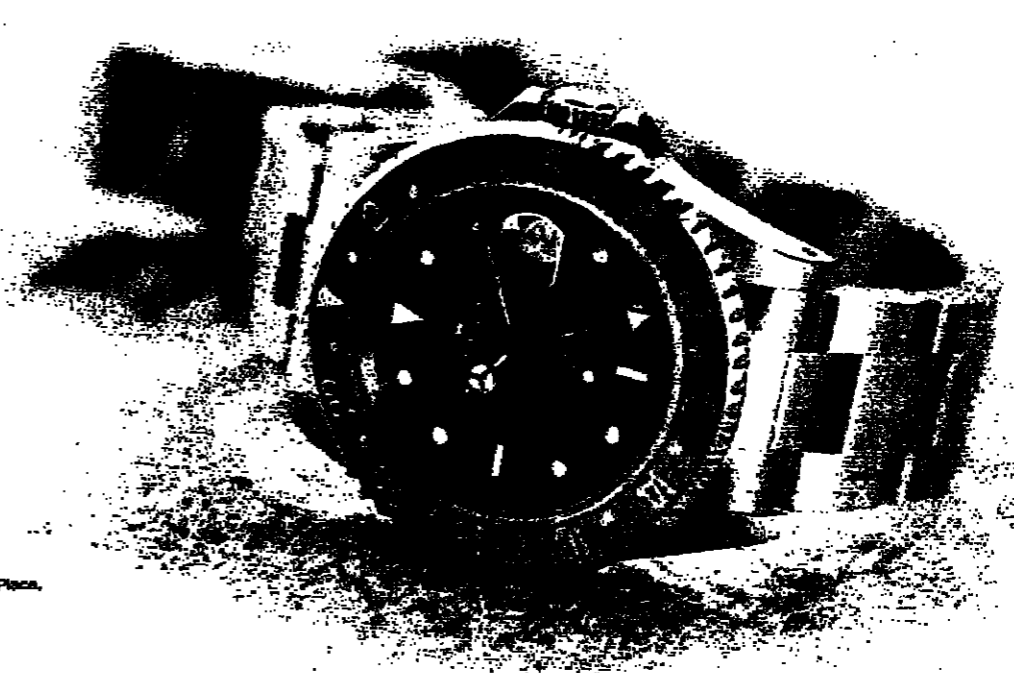


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Condon predicts end of bobbies on the beat

By Stewart Tandler, Crime Correspondent

THE traditional "bobby on the beat" could vanish from the streets, according to Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Faced with tightening budgets and calls for greater efficiency, police forces may no longer be able to afford to allow officers to walk the streets for hours each day. Instead Sir Paul, the most senior operational police officer in the country, forecast that the public would have to accept the greater use of technology, including equipment such as a new generation of "smart" closed-circuit television security systems.

Sir Paul, who started his career in the 1960s on the beat in East London, admitted that his force was no longer promising to increase the number of street patrols. He said: "We can't keep a high visibility patrol up." All forces face

stark choices about traditional policing and Sir Paul accepted that the bobby on the beat was an endangered species. Sir Paul, who is now the longest-serving commissioner for 30 years, said: "The service will not be able to generate significant new numbers of bobbies on the beat from within current arrangements. We can't conjure up thousands of extra officers."

Sir Paul said that the end of patrolling officers could be hastened as forces pared their budgets and cut manpower. The Metropolitan Police has already allowed its strength to fall from 28,000 to 26,900. He also raised the possibility of a new round of force amalgamations. Groups of small forces may eventually have to combine to offer leaner and cheaper services.

In the next century he foresaw debates about polic-

ing moving from the numbers chief constables can put on the beat to "community safety" involving better design of streets, greater responsibility on parents and high technology. He said: "We are on the verge of great developments on what technology can do. It will begin to compensate and replace some of the reassurance we have sought from bobbies on the beat."

Sir Paul said public security would be provided by new developments such as the use of cameras and computers to check car registrations.

He said he had also just been shown another new system which can protect car parks and streets. Video cameras watch the scene and can be programmed to trigger alarms at anything out of the ordinary such as someone trying a series of car doors or attacking cars.



Over and out: the traditional bobby on the beat could vanish from the streets

Tradition with roots in attempt to reassure the public

By Stewart Tandler

UNIFORMED police officers have been walking the beat since 1829 when Robert Peel's new Metropolitan Police marched out from Scotland Yard. He told his force their main task was not the detection of crime but its prevention by their appearance on the streets.

Armed with staves and reinforced hats, they launched the "new police" and a system of routinely patrolling the streets of Britain's towns and cities, fair weather and foul. Under a 24-hour system, shifts of officers walked a measured beat at an even tread and were monitored by more senior officers.

Each shift mustered at their police station listened to reports from their sergeant about felons at large or local difficulties and then marched off. To leave a beat was to risk instant dismissal. Within a few months of the start of the London force, two officers were sacked after taking advantage of a London fog to slip away.

Officers wore a white and blue armband to ensure that the public knew they were on duty. To call for help or to warn of fires — one of their early tasks — the officers were issued with rattles. These were replaced in the 1880s with whistles.

By the turn of the century the patrolling officer had become a reassuring figure for middle-class families and the bane of criminal classes. In London's East End, flower pots were left on the walkways of tenements to be tipped on the head of intruding constables.

But with the growth of the car there were rising doubts about the efficiency of the system. It was calculated that an officer on the beat could walk for 40 years before actually catching a burglar at work. In the 1960s forces moved increasingly towards the mobile patrol, arguing they gave a quicker response linked to the introduction of personal radios. The Panda Car was born.

But by the 1980s the pendulum was moving back the other way. The rash of riots which hit inner cities spawned the Scarman report and the calls for "community policing" which meant taking officers out of their cars and back on the streets to meet the public.

But privately many chief constables have long questioned the wisdom of placating the public appetite for a visible police presence and politicians have fought shy of biting the bullet. Yet the officers are already growing rare. A few years Scotland Yard calculated it could put less than 1,000 on the beat at any one time out of a manpower of 27,000. Faced with a mass of duties and increasing demands from investigating domestic violence to anti-terrorist patrols, the Yard ran out of officers.



A Peeler from 1836



A Bobby in the 1850s



A constable from 1865



A constable of 1909

Princes will be consulted on future of fund

By Daniel McGrory

TRUSTEES of the memorial fund set up to honour Diana, Princess of Wales, are to ask her sons if they want the charity to continue.

They intend to hold consultations in the next few weeks with Prince William and Prince Harry after criticism by Earl Spencer that the charity is degrading her memory. Prince William was reported at the weekend to be "angry and upset" at the commercial exploitation of his mother.

The trustees will also seek the opinion of the Prince of Wales and senior government figures after suggestions at the weekend that Tony Blair sympathises with the earl's view that the fund should be wound up.

Lord Spencer wants the charity to fix a date when it will stop taking donations. The trustees will discuss the fund's future next month, but those involved with Britain's most successful charity say that it is "impractical and naive" to consider closing it.

They are concerned at growing opposition to the fund from politicians, church leaders and members of the Spencer family. The Princess's mother, Frances Shand Kydd, said that she supported her son writing to the trustees, and

that she shared his distaste at allowing the Princess's signature to promote tubs of margarine and other products that the earl called "lucky and degrading".

At her home near Oban, Mrs Shand Kydd is reported as saying: "My son wrote on behalf of me as well as himself with questions of concern to us." She is thought to be keen to dispel suggestions of a feud between the earl and his sister, Lady Sarah McCorquodale, who is president of the fund. Mrs Shand Kydd described her daughter as showing "great courage and integrity" in her role.

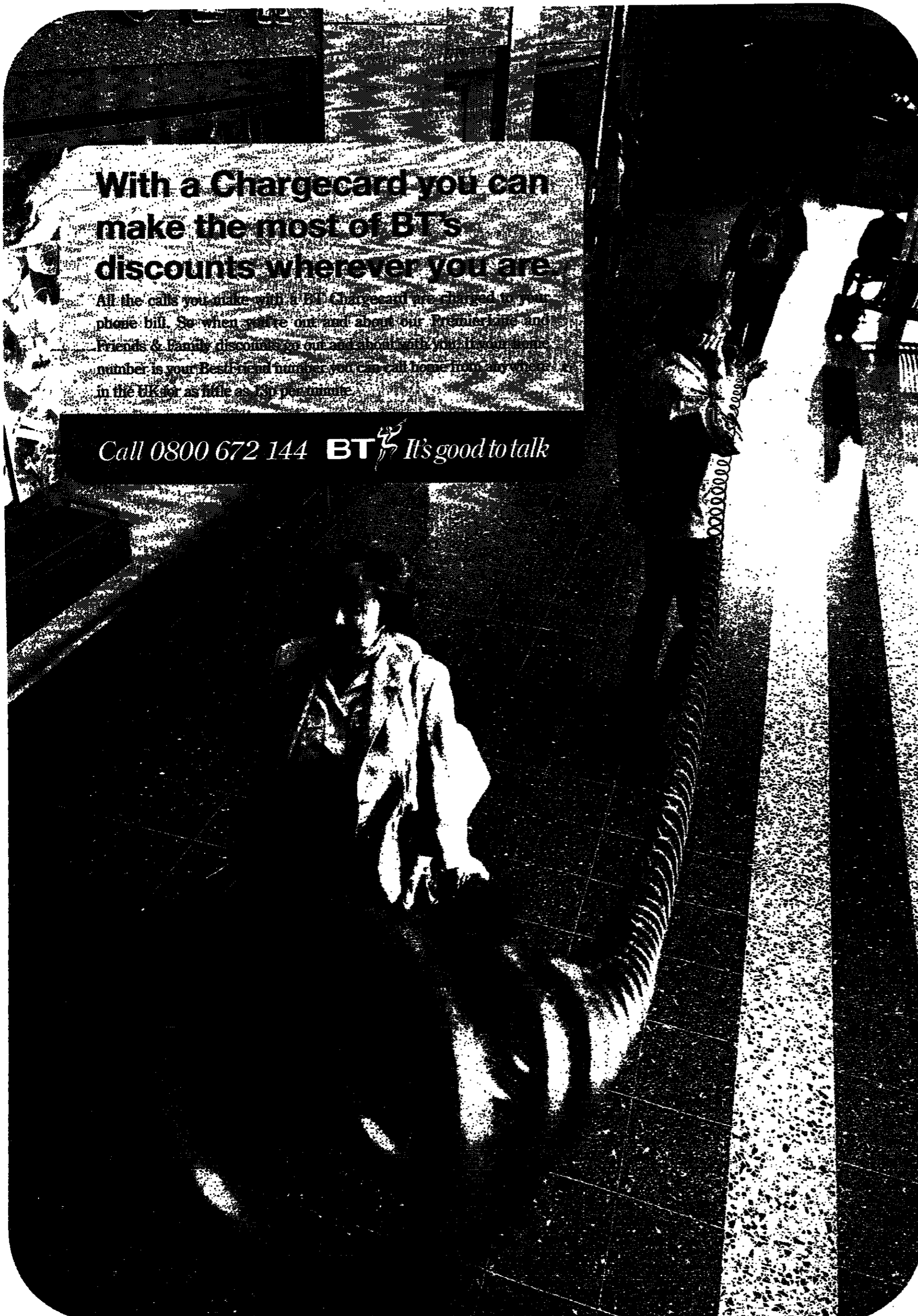
Lady Sarah believes that the Spencer family cannot take over responsibility for the "Diana industry" and that, for taxation reasons, only a charity can perform that role. The difficulty for Lady Sarah is that this dispute arises as she and the earl discuss plans for the museum at their family estate at Althorp, scheduled to open this summer with profits going to the fund.

The fund is anxious to prevent family rivalries jeopardising a charity that raised more money in yesterday's London marathon towards its goal of £100 million by the end of the year.

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THE Enfield Mandel in BBC

Dickens' Mr De Boy in BBC production

When marriage game of two ha

Enfield to play Mandelson role in BBC comedy

HARRY ENFIELD, the comedian who famously launched a drunken tirade against Peter Mandelson at a Downing Street drinks party, is to star in a new BBC comedy parodying the minister in charge of the Millennium Dome.

The production — *Norman Normal: A Politician for the People* — appears to be a thinly disguised attack on Mr Mandelson, who has special responsibilities for the Dome at Greenwich.

Enfield plays an ambitious right-wing new Labour MP who makes his way up the political ladder and is dubbed "The Lord of Cool Britannia" by the press. Norman Normal launches a "let's make Britain with-it campaign" and is later made special adviser to the Millennium Dome Experience. Enfield's confrontation with Mr Mandelson happened last November when he attended the party and, fuelled by champagne, urged Tony Blair

After a drunken tirade at No 10 the left-wing comic has a new target, reports Carol Midgley

to sack the spin-doctor because he was "ghastly". He told Mr Blair: "He got you into Downing Street — now stab him in the back. I speak for the nation."

Earlier at the party, which was attended by new Labour celebrity supporters, Enfield had stumbled up to Mandelson and told him: "Nobody likes you. You're ghastly. You should resign." He then added: "We're off to see the leader now to get you sacked. Cheer-

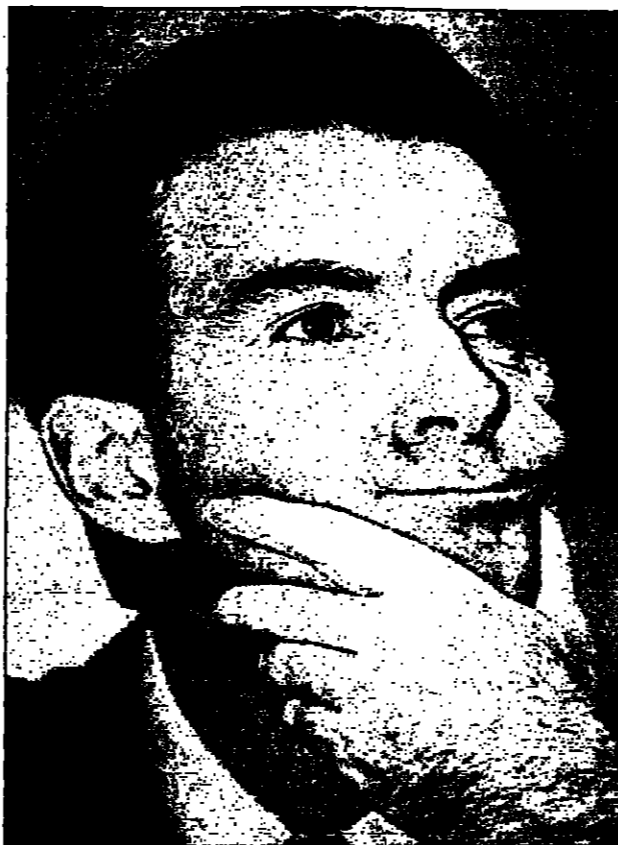
io." Enfield later apologised for his outburst, explaining that he was "squiffy". He had been dragged away from Mr Blair by his wife, Lucy, and Ben Elton.

In a letter Mr Mandelson accepted his apology and added that he was a great fan of the award-winning comedian. He said he had dismissed the incident, assuming Enfield was acting out his Tory Boy character from one of his television shows.

The 90-minute film which will be shown on BBC1 next year was written by the columnist and sketchwriter Craig Brown.

Enfield will also play other characters whose names will ring bells — Edwina Sleggy, Geoffrey Hush, Dame Shirley Mess, Julian Bitchley and Sir Marcus Flatcap.

The BBC is being diplomatic about the links to Mr Mandelson, saying that the characters are based on observations



Peter Mandelson, left, and Harry Enfield, who will play a character resembling the Minister without Portfolio



of several politicians, but an insider said: "It won't take a genius to work out the parallels."

A spokesman for the BBC said: "Harry has been nominated in the Bafta Awards and

is one of the outstanding comedy forces of this generation. It is exciting that he is committed to a piece with such contemporary cutting edge."

Enfield's criticisms of new Labour are well documented.

He has attacked Harriet Harman, the Social Security Secretary, and Margaret Hodge, MP for Barking, and accused new Labour of being a slightly more right-wing version of Mrs Thatcher's govern-

ments. "I think a few of them are in the wrong party," he has said.

The comedy was announced at the Montreux Festival by Paul Jackson, Controller of Entertainment for the BBC.

Palace sad as BBC downplays the anthem

By Alan Hamilton

BUCKINGHAM Palace said last night that it was saddened at a decision by the BBC to reduce the number of times it broadcasts the national anthem on Royal Family birthdays.

Last Tuesday, the Queen's 72nd birthday, the anthem was played only once on Radio 4, before the 7am news, but not again at 8am, as in previous years. A BBC spokeswoman said last night that the anthem was under continuous review by Radio 4 managers and had been part of the recent major review of the station.

"We decided that we will mark significant birthdays in future, but the decision on which birthdays are significant will be taken later," the BBC said.

The Queen's actual birthday will continue to be marked, as will the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday in November. The Queen's official birthday in June is still under consideration, as is the Queen Mother's 98th birthday in August.

Dickens meets Del Boy in £4m BBC production

By Carol Midgley

CHARLES DICKENS is to meet Del Boy Trotter in a new £4-million production of *David Copperfield*.

John Sullivan, the creator of television's most successful comedy *Only Fools and Horses*, is adapting Dickens's novel for the BBC — which has cast David Jason and Nicholas Lyndhurst in the lead roles. Jason, who played wide boy Del in the comedy, is lined up for the role of the mercurial Mr Micawber. Lyndhurst, the hapless Rodney, is to be cast as the obsequious Uriah Heep.

Pauline Quirke — Sharon in the sitcom *Birds of a Feather* — will play Peggotty in a move indicative of the BBC's drive to make classic drama appeal to a wider audience. Richard Wilson, who plays Victor Meldrew in *One Foot in the Grave*, Stephen Fry and Patricia Routledge, from the sitcom

Keeping Up Appearances, are also likely candidates for other roles.

The BBC starts filming this summer for the production which will be its fourth adaptation of *David Copperfield* — Dickens's own favourite and widely regarded as his veiled autobiography. Other productions were made in 1966, 1974 and 1980. The part of Mr Micawber was first played in 1935 by W.C. Fields.

Paul Jackson, the controller of BBC entertainment, emphasised that it would be a faithful adaptation in period costume and not a comedy version.

"The characters in *David Copperfield* are what turned John Sullivan on to becoming a writer in the first place as a schoolboy. It inspired him to create the characters of Del Boy and Rodney and this will be a wonderful production," he said.

It is likely to be screened at Christmas.

Mr Jackson also revealed that he was keen to reintroduce the comfort of the end-of-pier variety show to television. The format, which was popularised by Cilla Black and Lulu, may be revived for prime-time television, possibly hosted by the former *Take That* singer Robbie Williams or by Kylie Minogue. The programmes will provide a showcase for musical acts in a way that has not been seen since the 1970s.

The BBC is keen to put music back into prime time. The Radio 1 DJs Mark Radcliffe and Mark "Lard" Riley are to be given their own music chat show and there are plans for a music show with Chris Moyles, another Radio 1 DJ.

Top of the Pops, meanwhile, is about to be relaunched with a remix of its old signature tune *A Whole Lotta Love* by Led Zeppelin. □ The Page 3 model Melinda Messenger is to host *Ford Boyard*, an action adventure show, for Channel 5 this autumn.



The *Copperfield* drama stars Quirke and Jason



When marriage is a game of two halves

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

THE marriage guidance charity Relate is to set up special counselling clinics during the World Cup this summer and will issue guidelines explaining how couples can ease the tension on match days.

Fran Bradley, training leader at Relate, said: "We would like to set up help-lines this summer for partners of football addicts, but unfortunately it's a question of funds. The next best thing we can do is to urge all couples that include a footballing half to consider some key points. Don't wait until you have reached crisis point."

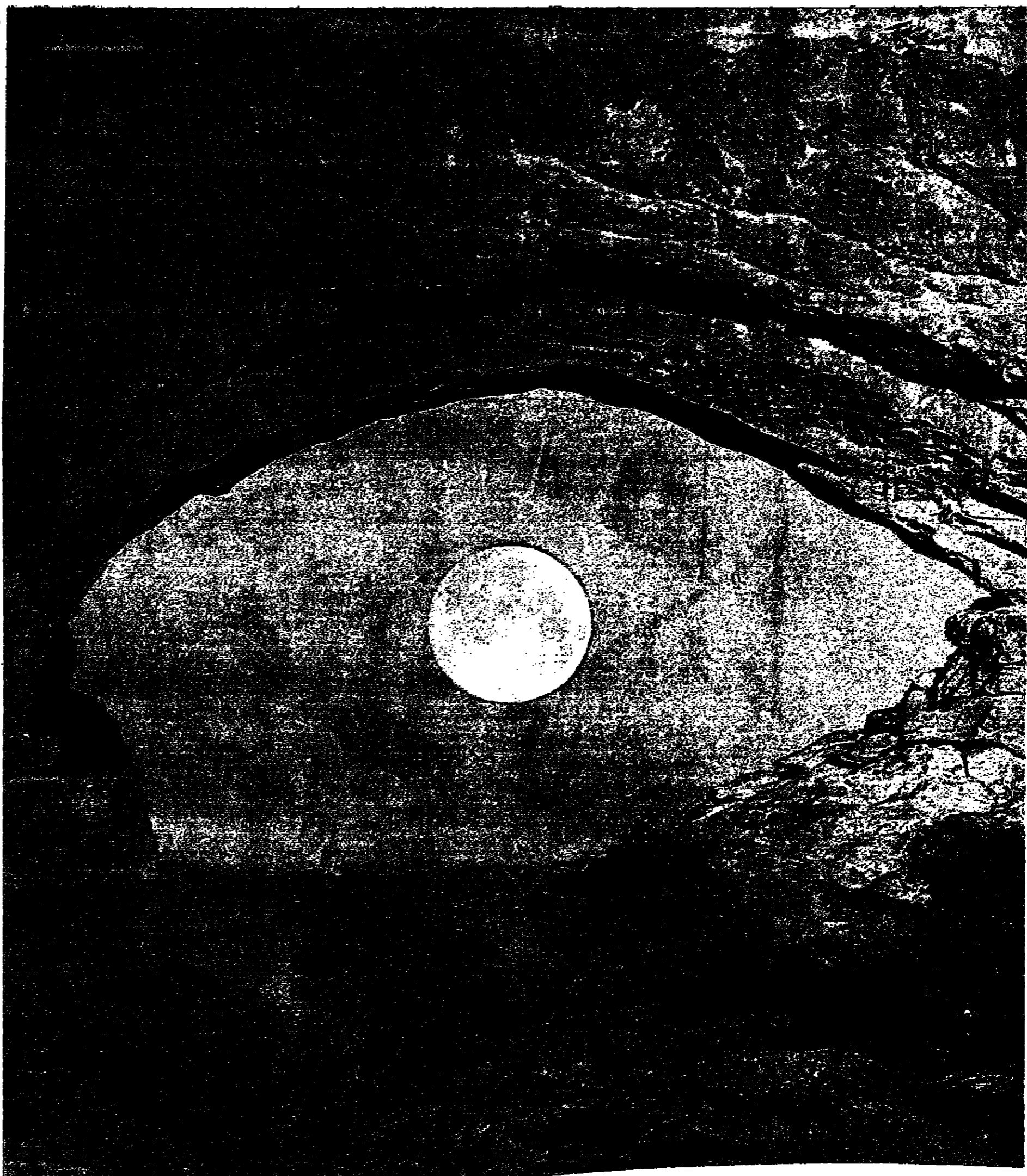
Relate says that one half of a couple may feel jealous of the partner's attention on football and wonder why they do not see the same passion in their relationship. Family days out could be spoiled and domestic tasks ignored, leading to arguments

that last for weeks. Rows start with one person monopolising the television, so couples should agree which games are "unmissable" and which are less important.

Relate warns: "Don't try to discuss the issue in the middle of the big match. Standing in front of the television will only cause you to row rather than make constructive plans to cope with the problem. Choose a time when you are relaxed and able to talk without interruption."

Alcohol should be kept to a minimum, alternating strong drinks with soft ones or sticking to tea and coffee.

If all else fails, Relate suggests a partner ignored for football should try watching the partner. "You might find yourself entering into the spirit of the match, and at least be able to share some of the excitement."



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BRITISH AIRWAYS

Irvine woos 'shy' women to sit on the Bench

By Frances Gibb, Legal Correspondent

THE Lord Chancellor has launched a campaign for more women QCs and judges with the slogan "Don't be shy, apply" and has gently admonished potential candidates for lacking confidence.

Lord Irvine of Lairg announced the creation of a unit within his department to promote initiatives encouraging female applicants. In this year's competition for silk, only 9 per cent of applicants were women, he told the Woman Lawyer conference on Saturday. Yet women made up 14 per cent of barristers of more than 15 years' service.

"Why aren't more of you applying?"

He pointed out that, of the 46 women who did apply for

silk, ten — 22 per cent — were successful, a record proportion and number. The figures were a tribute to the high levels of ability to be found among women lawyers, he said.

"I have confidence in you," he told 400 lawyers gathered in London for the conference, sponsored by *The Times*. "If you won't be angry with me for saying it, you need to have more confidence in yourselves. I need you to apply for appointment. In return, I promise that you will be given a fair chance to succeed."

Lord Irvine said that he had transferred funds within his department to expedite reforms of judicial appointments. A senior official had



Lord Irvine at the Woman Lawyer conference. "You need to have more confidence in yourselves," he said

been appointed to push forward equal-opportunity measures, such as mentoring, in which a judge oversees a part-time judge, and block sittings, enabling women to record service as part-time judges in a more practical way.

Lord Irvine rejected recent suggestions that the silks system should be abolished. He said: "Most other professions have a framework for career progression. Young doctors

strive to become consultants. Ambitious young civil servants want to become permanent secretaries. Why should the law become any different?"

Nor did he have any intention of abolishing the system of consultation on applicants for the bench, attacked by some as "secret soundings". "I do not consult a favoured few, but an informed many. For example, in the last competition for assistant recorder-

ships, over 1,600 people were consulted; 8,000 written comments were received on about 1,000 candidates."

During questions, the Lord Chancellor was criticised by Barbara Calvert, QC, a senior family silk and winner of *The Times* lifetime achievement in the law award, over two recent appointments to the High Court Family Division from outside the Family Law Bar. She said: "I know of three silks

who were eminently suitable, and I wonder if the present system overlooks the best potential judges?"

Lord Irvine said he did not believe in being unduly wedded to specialisation in appointing judges. But he added that, if she wrote to him with the names, he would consider them.

Workplace equality and Diary, page 22

Bias persists, says Bar pupil

By Frances Gibb

A PUPIL barrister attacked the discriminatory attitudes that persist at the Bar in the selection of pupils or trainees, which were in clear breach of the Bar's equality code.

Jody Beveridge, 28, who has three children under five, said that she was asked at five out of six interviews about her childcare arrangements, her partner and whether she had not appreciated that the Bar was a challenge.

Ms Beveridge, who received five offers of pupillage and is to start in chambers in York in July, said: "The competition for these places is so great that you can't complain — you just have to answer the questions. But no man would have been asked them. It would not be an issue. In fact, a male friend of mine was upset that I got all these questions and he got none."

She claimed that another friend, who was attractive, was asked if she had thought of going into fashion.

There were 1,900 would-be young barristers fighting for a pupillage (training place) and about 300 places, she said. For each pupillage, there were some 150 others ready to jump into one's place.

Margaret McCabe, organiser of the conference, said that only about 50 chambers had complied with the equality code, setting up appropriate procedures for selection and training as well as complaints processes.

It still remained a huge problem for women wanting to complain about sexual harassment and discrimina-

tion. "There is still the perception that, if you complain at the Bar, you are dead meat." But there were a number of barristers and support networks now operating to help barristers and ensure that they could move chambers if they had a problem, she said.

The High Court judge, Dame Mary Arden, currently chairman of the Law Commission, called for a change of attitude among male colleagues — including the Lord Chancellor. They should appreciate that women had different needs from men. "The Lord Chancellor thought (in his speech) that women lawyers are just the same and have the same contribution to make," she said.

But Dame Mary told the Woman Lawyers conference: "We definitely have different needs and I don't think that's altogether recognised. We do bear the brunt of family responsibility, of children and elder members of the family, and generally running the home, and so our working practices need to be different."

To achieve real equality, there had to be changes to working practices to bring greater flexibility. Women — a sought-after resource in the labour market — should press for these, she said.

A *Times* leading article was recently headed "New Britain, Old Men", she said. "We want New Britain, New Men, New Women."

Women of achievement in the law awards will be published on the legal pages tomorrow.

QCs attack list of legal aid earnings

By Our Legal Correspondent

OFFICIAL figures listing high earnings from legal aid work by leading Queen's Counsel are misleading and inaccurate, the Bar has claimed.

Statistics from the Lord Chancellor's Department disclosing the 20 barristers who reap most from the legal aid fund are expected to be published tomorrow. But the Bar has released its own analysis of the figures detailing alleged errors.

The Bar says that, in the case of one barrister, the figures included £180,715 listed in the figures published for last year. In the case of Ronald Thwaites, QC, the figures were out by £200,000 and many other totals were wrong by tens of thousands of pounds. Andrew Trollope, QC, has a sum listed for his earnings that he amassed over three years, not one, the Bar says.

The figures come in a parlia-

mentary answer, tabled in reply to a question from a parliamentary private secretary. It coincides with the profession's response to proposed legal aid reforms.

The Bar said: "The publication of these figures is designed to discredit legal aid. But it fails even in this objective. The cases covered by these payments highlight the problems of no win, no fee agreements (to be introduced by the Government across all civil cases). Without legal aid, many of these cases would never have been taken yet the outcomes were successful."

The Bar maintains the figures are closer to a turnover from legal aid, include VAT and the costs of running chambers. A deduction of 35 per cent for overheads should be made, it says, and even that is before tax. The figures also often represented work done over several years.

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Ainsdale, near Southport, one of the beaches in the North West that failed to meet the stringent tests set by the Marine Conservation Society. Resorts in the region were described as a "source of national shame"

Britain's beaches are dirtier than ever

Sewage is still a risk to bathers, says new guide. **Russell Jenkins** reports

BRITAIN'S beaches are still no cleaner, according to a new bathing guide. Bathers risk sewage-related infections at many of the big holiday resorts, despite greater investment by water companies.

The *Reader's Digest Good Beach Guide 1998*, compiled by the Marine Conservation Society and published today, concludes that the coastline continues to be threatened by high levels of pollution.

Blackpool, Lytham St Annes, Southport and other resorts in the North West are a "source of national shame". Researchers for the environmental agency were able to recommend only 125 beaches as clean, out of 755 monitored — a drop of 8 per cent on last year.

The beaches of Bude, in Cornwall, Weymouth in Dor-

set, East Hayling in Hampshire, Skegness in Lincolnshire, Abersoch in North Wales, Whitesand Bay at St Davids, Pembrokeshire, and St Ives in Cornwall are among those that passed the stringent tests and are recommended.

No beaches in the North West achieve the criteria. The beaches that failed the test stretch down from St Bees in Cumbria to Ainsdale in Sefton. They include Blackpool's North and South Pier, Bardsea in Cumbria, Cleveleys in Lancashire, Lytham St Annes and Southport. The results come at a time when water service companies are spending large amounts of money on sewage treatment plants.

The test criteria, set by the Marine Conservation Society,

are more stringent than those set by the Environment Agency, which expressed disappointment last December when it could find little improvement in the overall picture.

The society demands that water is not affected by any sewage outfall unless the discharge is treated and disinfected. Water must also conform to the microbiological standards set by the European Commission's Bathing Water Directive.

The bathing guide reported that 70 per cent of the 755 beaches monitored failed to reach the society's guideline standard, and that 122 failed outright.

Chris Davis, editor of the guide, said that work being done by the water companies was little comfort to bathers

exposed to increased health risks. Improvements would not be completed until the millennium.

"It is a very dismal picture. Yet again so many areas are failing to meet the standards set by European law. Instead of beaches getting cleaner for holidaymakers to swim in, they are getting worse," Mr Davis said.

"If you bathe along beaches that fail the standard, you may not get a serious disease but you could come away with an ear, nose or throat infection or diarrhoea. Bathing in sewage contaminated waters is also associated with hepatitis A.

"It is totally unacceptable. We should be able to go and enjoy the coastline and feel safe that we are bathing in clean water."

The guide insists that the

REGION	Percentage of Beaches Monitored in 1998	Percentage of Beaches Meeting EU Standards		Percentage of Beaches Meeting Bathing Water Directive		Percentage of Beaches Meeting All Three	
		1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
TOTAL	755	299	122	289	239	126	125
South West	199	19	23	103	86	54	57
South East	142	20	25	72	75	49	49
East Coast	29	7	6	11	9	5	5
North West	24	14	12	0	1	0	0
Wales	171	31	24	40	49	24	25
Scotland	81	25	27	37	12	12	12
Northern Ireland	29	0	2	14	11	0	0
Channel Islands	24	0	0	21	17	0	0
Isle of Man	25	23	9	0	0	0	0

suggested that bathers should be able to enjoy the benefits of current investment in the years to come. A spokesman said: "The longer-term picture is better."

Anthony Goldstone, chairman of the North West Tourist Board and a former chairman of North West Ofwat, was exasperated by the survey, conducted he believed, by those living in an ivory tower.

He insisted that an enormous amount of work was being done to improve sewage treatment and pointed to investment of £150 million by North West Water. Although the company had not done everything asked of it, it should be given credit for that.

He said: "This is not a problem that is going to cause distress to holidaymakers or reduce tourism. What is going to cause distress is reports like this. The situation is improving tremendously."

Irish Sea is now more chemically contaminated than the North Sea, with the Mersey Estuary and Liverpool Bay suffering from oil spills and the "deliberate and unacceptable" discharges of mercury,

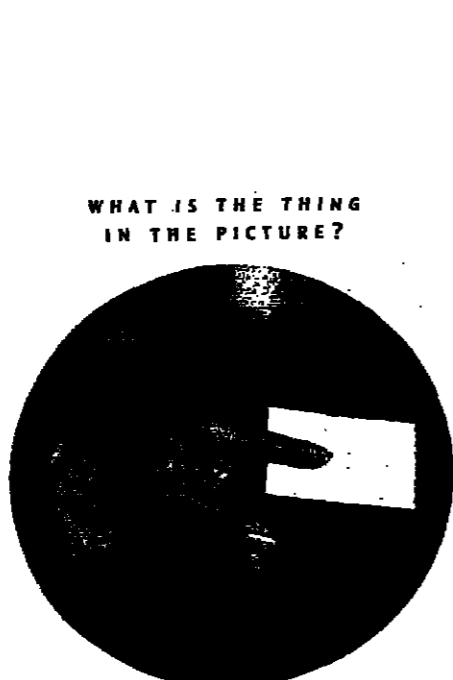
cadmium and lead. It also mentions the "insidious" effect of radioactive waste. More than £100 million is being spent on the region's coastline, with North West Water recently completing an

updated sewage treatment system for Blackpool. "Sadly, the quality of bathing water over the region's beaches actually deteriorated in 1997," the guide says. The Environment Agency

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 - (b) The back of a business card.
 - (c) The back of a business card — I can use the back of my business cards to print a description of my product and pricing.



- WHAT IS THIS?
- (a) An angry customer — I'll hide till he's gone.
 - (b) An angry customer — I suppose I'd better pacify him.
 - (c) An angry customer — he's brought something to my attention, he deserves to be treated so well he'll become a loyal fan.



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 - (b) Yes — pay them on the due date.
 - (c) Yes — pay them on the due date — and always include my brochure or catalogue in the return envelope. Someone might find it interesting.

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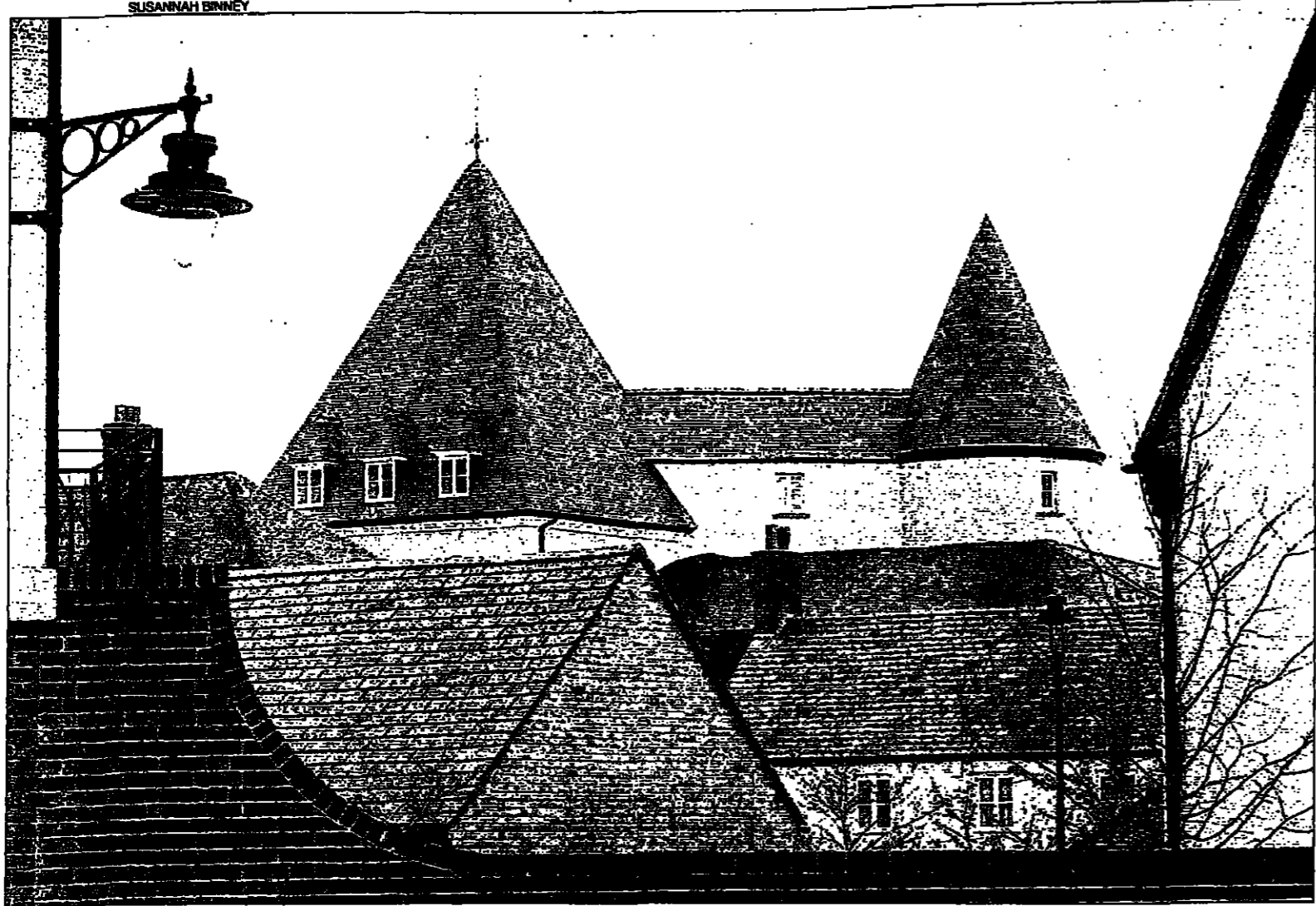
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The Prince of Wales hopes that the deliberate mix of private and social housing at Poundbury, near Dorchester, will create a model village

Prince's model village will play host to Queen

THE Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh are to pay their first visit to Poundbury, the model village being built by the Prince of Wales on the edge of Dorchester, Dorset.

Though often lampooned as an artificial time warp, Poundbury is the focus of a pioneering campaign to change the attitudes of housebuilders and planners on traffic, parking, housing mix, jobs and shopping.

Andrew Hamilton, the former developer who is overseeing the project for the Duchy of Cornwall, said: "We began building in the depths of the recession, when private housebuilders were very wary and, for that reason, many of the first houses are social housing offered to people on the local authority housing list at rents of £55 to £60 per week through the Guinness Trust.

"Our principle from the start has been to peppercorn the social housing, scattering it

Royal couple will visit Poundbury to see son's vision made real, writes Marcus Binney

through the development. Housebuilders said "We can't build private houses next to social houses, they won't sell. We have proved that this is not true."

Mr Hamilton recalled the retired clergyman who chose a house next to council housing and was told by the church authorities that it would not be a good investment. "But he persevered and resale values are up 20 per cent in three years."

Peter Bryant, the chairman of the Poundbury Residents' Association, said: "We have 150 families living here, retired people, single mums, single dads and conventional families with 1.2 children. I challenge anyone to tell the social housing from the private housing."

From the start, the Prince has fought a battle over dominance by the car. Leon Krier, the architect from Luxembourg who has planned the model village, said: "Poundbury isn't full of the usual dead-ends you find on new housing estates. The streets are simply short and winding on the same principle that streambeds slow down water."

Mr Hamilton said they had been told by Highways Agency planners to provide 2.5 parking spaces for each house. "We got this down to 2.3, but the reality is that most residents have only one car. If we can further reduce the number of parking spaces, we can give people larger gardens."

The duchy has introduced trees, garages and houses into parking courtyards and decided to build some homes overlooking the parking. Mr Hamilton said: "The housebuilders told us these would have a negative value. So we did a deal that, if they sold for low cost, we'd make up the difference and, if they went for more, we'd get a cut. The first house to sell was a courtyard house and we've been getting dividends ever since."

Mr Krier was determined

that residents should be able to walk to work, and the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh will see the first of the Prince's workshops and factories — a computer firm established in a group of old barns — and a factory under construction for Dorchester Chocolates, which has outgrown its existing premises in the town.

Sue McCarthy-Moore, who runs a soft furnishings business, said: "I approached the duchy when Poundbury was a sea of mud and my house didn't exist. Previously I'd worked from home, now I'm in a courtyard of six workshops with a furniture restorer and a local college next door. It's brilliant because my children can pop round and see me when they get home from school."

Mr Krier continued: "Highway regulations say one car parking space must be provided for every 200 square feet of workspace, but it's crazy to cover the place with Tarmac when people are living nearby."

So far Poundbury has not achieved the critical mass to attract its own shops, but Mr Hamilton is working on a plan by which Tesco, which has a large store south of the town, will make deliveries to a local shop. "There's no way people in Dorset are going to pay supermarkets £5 for house deliveries as they do in London. Our idea is to have a collection point in a local shop with a large fridge."

As Poundbury grows, residents are seeking their own community facilities. "We need a village hall where people can meet, hold aerobics classes and use for children's clubs," Mr Bryant said.



Hamilton said mix of housing worked well

Banned whale meat found on sale in Japan

By Nick Nuttall, Environment Correspondent

MEAT from a protected species of whale has been found on sale in Japan, strong evidence that the country is engaged in illegal whaling or tolerating smugglers.

The discovery of the sei whale meat by scientists from Auckland University will be presented at the opening of the 50th International Whaling Commission in Oman today. The undercover team has also discovered meat from the protected humpback whale on sale.

In the past, Japan has insisted that such finds have come from stockpiled whale meat held in freezers. But the two new finds challenge its claim. Genetic testing indicates that both species were illegally caught after the 12-year-old ban came into force.

Elliot Morley, the fisheries minister with responsibility for whaling, said yesterday: "The UK is keen to see the work done by Auckland University. It will be very disturbing if it shows whaling taking place on a wider scale than was previously thought." Britain would "not hesitate to raise the matter" at the meeting.

Vassili Papastavrou, a whale biologist with the British arm of the International Fund for Animal Welfare, which has funded the research, said yesterday: "For three years Japan has been talking about this issue, but it is clear they are doing next to nothing to control it."

He urged the British Government to press for a DNA database of protected whales and meat, to monitor vulnerable whale stocks more effectively. Mr Papastavrou said the database, allowing experts in-

stantly to match whale meat stocks with whale populations around the world, should be held at the commission's headquarters in Cambridge.

He said that Japan and Norway, which also hunts minke whales in defiance of international agreements, had muted plans to set up such a system. "But it needs to be transparent and above suspicion."

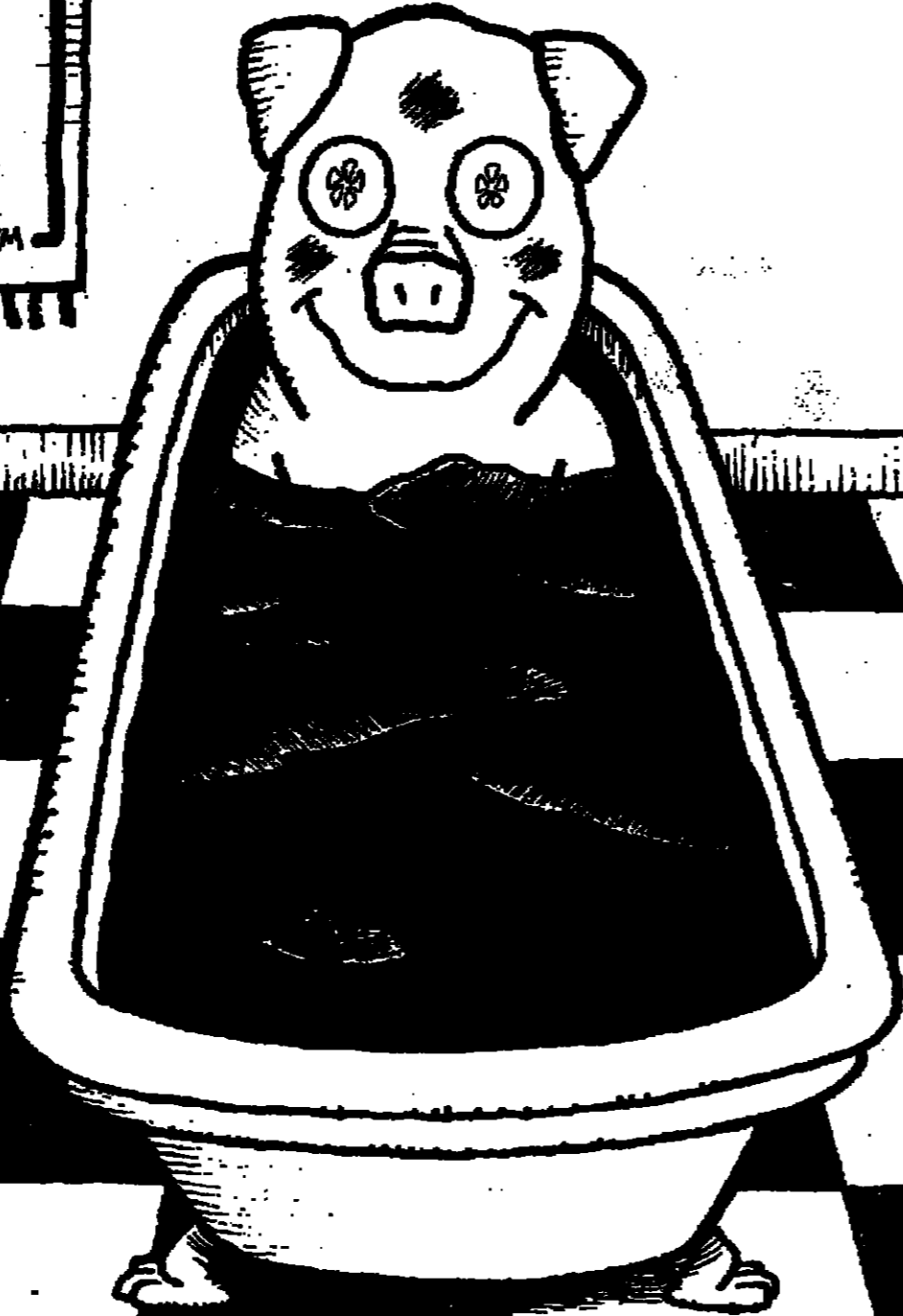
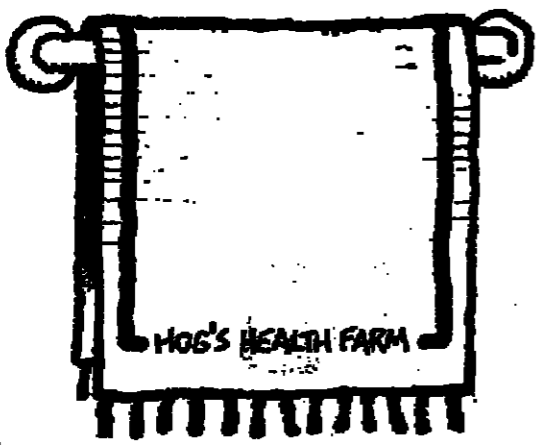
The findings of sei and humpback meat will be presented to the commission's scientific committee today by Scott Baker, senior lecturer at Auckland University's school of biological science. He has been genetically analysing meat from whale markets across Japan and Korea since 1994.

Dr Baker buys samples and uses a kit in his hotel room to make synthetic copies of the meat's DNA. If he shipped meat from a protected whale out of Japan for analysis at his laboratory, he would be breaking trading laws under the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species.

The research has discovered an array of whale and cetacean species on sale in Japan, including fin, minke, Bryde's, pygmy sperm, porpoise, Baird's beaked and a blue/fin hybrid killed by Icelandic whalers in 1989. Some of these species were last hunted by Iceland, who continued so-called scientific whaling until 1989.

The two recent discoveries are unlikely to have come from Icelandic hunts and have been illegally hunted by Japanese ships, or caught as by-catch in contravention of the rules, or smuggled into Japan by pirate whalers.

Scottish Amicable



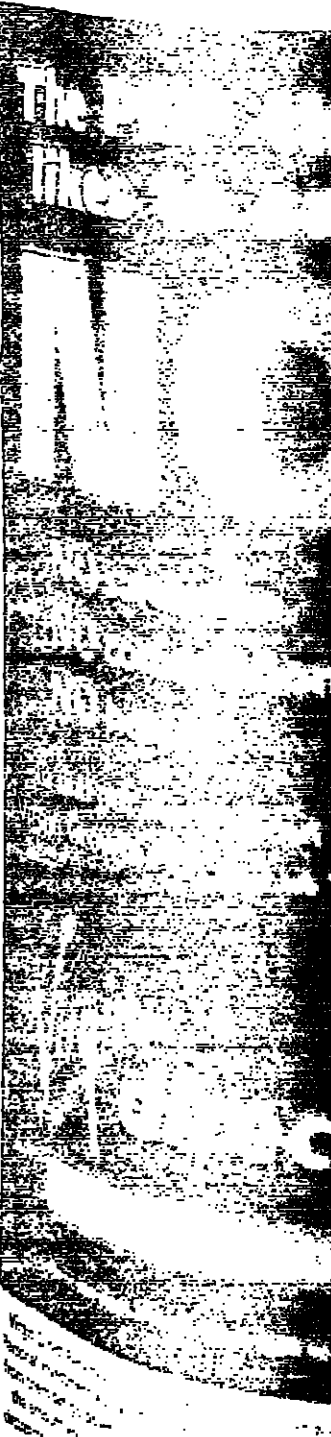
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Children's new app school

Babies' hospital



Model play teen

Children find a new appetite for school dinners

BY JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

CHILDREN are turning against the lunchbox culture of the past two decades and returning to school dinners, according to a survey published today.

Traditional favourites such as sponge pudding and custard are making a comeback in primary schools, where there has been an 8 per cent rise in the take-up of school meals this year. In secondary schools, increased choice and careful marketing have produced a 24 per cent rise.

Research published to mark the start of National School Meals Week shows that pizza has become the first choice in primary and secondary education. Although older pupils were opting for convenience desserts, such as doughnuts, puddings with custard once more reigned supreme in primary schools.

The take-up of school meals slumped in the 1980s when the service became optional for local authorities. But the past two years have been marked by gradual increases in the number of meals served in state schools. Despite the fact that several counties cater only for children entitled to free meals, almost half of primary pupils are taking school dinners this year.

Among 563 headteachers in a representative sample of schools, almost three quarters thought the quality of school meals had improved in recent years. A third said children were easier to teach in the

FAVOURITES

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

- Main courses
1. Pizza
 2. Fish fingers
 3. Sausages
 4. Turkey drummers
 5. Roast dinner
- Sweets
1. Sponge and custard
 2. Chocolate sponge and custard
 3. Yoghurt
 4. Biscuits

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

- Main courses
1. Pizza
 2. Burgers
 3. Curry
 4. Chicken/turkey burgers
 5. Hot dog
- Sweets
1. Doughnuts
 2. Tray-baked puddings
 3. Biscuits and a drink
 4. Yoghurt

afternoon if they had had a full meal.

John Murray, the deputy head of St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School, near Guildford, Surrey, where more than half the children take school dinners regularly, said: "For those who bring their own packed lunches, it tends to be scoff and out, jumping around. If they sit down for a decent meal, they are more relaxed; it gives them a rest, as well as revitalising the body."

John Davies, who chairs the Local Authority Caterers Association, said: "There is a lot more choice now, even in primary schools, and a great deal of work has gone into marketing the service to parents and pupils."

In Shropshire, where Mr Davies is responsible for ca-

tering, parents may sample meals and menus are sent home regularly. "Teachers and parents have come to see the benefit of school meals, and a lot more attention is given to what they contain."

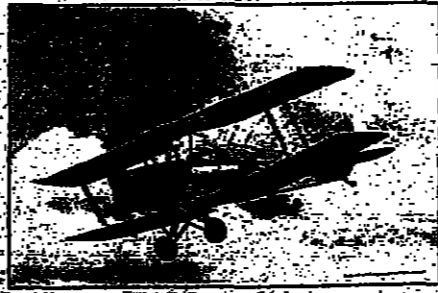
David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, has promised to publish nutritional guidelines for school meals within the next few weeks. Almost nine out of ten headteachers and two thirds of catering managers in the survey supported the move.

The take-up of meals among paying customers varies enormously, according to a recent report by the Audit Commission. With the price of meals varying little between authorities, the commission believes that levels of custom reflect the quality of food. Doncaster has the most popular service, with 66 per cent of pupils buying meals, while at Hillingdon, northwest London, only 11 per cent did so.

PERSONNE DISPARUE



Est-ce que vous avez vu cette personne?



Est-ce que vous avez vu cet avion?

Kent police hope the posters will shed light on the disappearance of Roger Fiennes

Police liaise with French in search for missing pilot

FROM PETER BIRKETT IN DIEPPE

THE intensive police investigation into the disappearance of Roger Fiennes, the amateur Tiger Moth pilot, took a fresh turn yesterday when a British detective arrived in France to discuss the case with his French counterparts.

Detective Sergeant Sutherland, of Kent police's European Liaison Unit, travelled to Dieppe, where Mr Fiennes, 54, was last seen a week ago, shortly before he took off in his 59-year-old biplane, apparently heading for England.

The visit came hours after the disclosure that Mr Fiennes, a cousin of Sir Ranulph Fiennes, the Arctic explorer, was facing mounting debts. It also followed a report yesterday that a radar replay had shown that an aircraft of the same size as Mr Fiennes's Tiger Moth left Dieppe on Sunday, flew 20 miles north over the Channel and then returned to France.

In a further twist, a French witness came forward yesterday to say that he heard an aircraft flying low with its engine "sounding very rough" 45 minutes after Mr Fiennes took off from Dieppe en route to Headcorn airfield, near Maidstone, Kent.

Detective Sergeant Sutherland, a French speaker, met Jean-Claude Lagrou, the French Special Branch detective in charge of the Dieppe investigation. He gave him a set of posters, which will be displayed in the Normandy fishing port, carrying pictures of Mr Fiennes and his aircraft and asking in French: "Have you seen this person? Have you seen this aircraft?"

Mr Sutherland said: "There are two distinct inquiries, one in England, the other in France and I am here to make contact and discuss matters of mutual interest."

A search of the Channel last week failed to find any trace of wreckage.

Babies checked in hospital TB scare

BY IAN MURRAY, MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

TESTS started yesterday to find out whether any of 400 babies who have been in contact with a junior doctor suffering from tuberculosis have been infected.

Almost all the families concerned have been contacted by staff at the Bradford Royal Infirmary and told when to bring their babies for the tests. About 200 tests will be carried out this week, but some babies will have to wait because the disease has a six-week incubation period and any test before then will not reveal an infection.

The doctor joined the maternity unit on February 4 and 1,000 babies have been born there since. However, he has only been in contact with 400

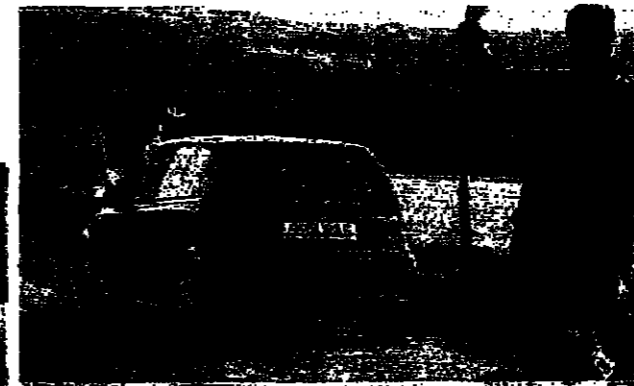
of them. Parents of the other 600 have been notified and told not to worry.

A Bradford Hospital NHS Trust spokesman said: "Although the risk of TB being passed on to patients is extremely small, the trust has taken the view that it is prudent to take all precautionary steps possible. The trust took swift action as soon as the junior doctor was suspected as having TB. He was removed immediately from clinical duties and his condition is much improved and he is responding well to treatment."

Michael Smith, the trust's medical director, said: "Contrary to popular belief, tuberculosis is not a highly infectious disease."



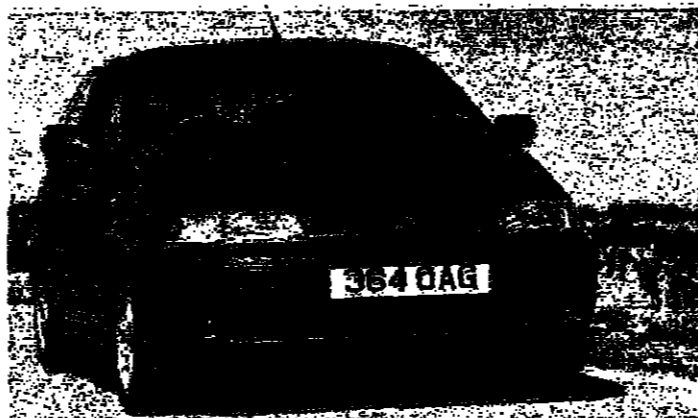
Yep... O.K... fine. Got it. Seems straightforward enough. Thanks a lot, bye.



So, do you know where you're going now?

Haven't a clue.

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And I thought you were only like that with anniversaries.



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Tide of novelty shows signs of ebbing

THE slowly emerging Dome has become the defining image of the Blair Government. Not the Prime Minister's cranium, whose greater visibility under the thinning thatch is mute testimony to the strains of office, but the huge structure rising from the Greenwich mudflats.

At present little more than a vast upturned spider of steel, critics have seen in the Dome a metaphor for Blairism: a grandiose structure, not built to last, that is echoing empty save for a few high-sounding themes. But as more of the Dome's contents are revealed, so reactions have changed.

Cynics remain, but supporters

find new reasons to sustain their optimism as clear priorities have been set. As for the Dome, so for the Government. Whatever criticisms are legitimately directed at the Blair team, the Prime Minister's popularity in the polls suggests he has proved himself more substantial than critics said he would.

But are the foundations for his sky-high ratings solidly based? This week, in the run-up to the first anniversary of Labour's landslide, *The Times* will take a measuring stick to the Government's record. Looking at each of the areas of national life to be celebrated in the Dome's 12 zones, *Times* writers will

Tony Blair has performed better than many thought, but critics remain. Michael Gove looks for the truth behind the soundbites

assess the state of Blair's Britain. That Britain, the Prime Minister famously claimed, was to be a "young country". He argued, when he swept into office, that it was not one man coming to power, but a generation. The number of ministers outside the Cabinet over the age of 50 was limited. An administration that was supposed to hit the ground running should not need Zimmer frames to support it.

The novelist Fay Weldon has

noted, cuttingly, that the Prime Minister's preference for surrounding himself with the young extends to being photographed at every opportunity flanked by children. John Major was often pictured surrounded by immature and bawling brats, but then he couldn't help the cameras in the Commons.

Mr Blair's prejudice towards the precocious seems to have been borne out after his first year in government. Those troubles he has

pop stars whose support was carefully solicited by Labour turned critical in the pages of the music press. Distaste for the Government's attempts to appropriate fashionable successes was not restricted to the trendy. Comfortable middle-class figures out of touch with youth culture were also offended, such as Ben Elton.

The Prime Minister is inclined to treat these criticisms as froth. His supporters say he prefers to concentrate on the big picture; not the one in Derry Irvine's bedroom, but the unfolding canvas of government achievement. From the granting of independence to the Bank of

England to a more constructive relationship with Europe, the scrapping of the NHS internal market, new targets in schools, a new deal for the unemployed, parliaments in Scotland and Wales and a new start in Northern Ireland, the canvas is certainly broad. But have the policies brought solid and enduring results?

For all Mr Blair's emphasis on the young and the fresh, will the verdict on his infant administration's achievements prove comfortable reading? Now this Government is one, is the nation at one?

Leading article, page 23

Patriotism is fractured by new loyalties

Magnus Linklater contrasts Celtic confidence with English self-doubt

AN ANXIOUS letter drops on my desk from the Ulster Society. What, it asks, does Britishness mean any more? Here in Northern Ireland, once the heartland of ultra-British sentiment, there are growing doubts.

A year ago it was possible to be clear about loyalty, the Queen, the traditional concept of belonging to a United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Being an Ulsterman meant being very British. Now, in the wake of the peace accord, the future has acquired a distinctly republican tinge.

Government is to be shared: Sinn Fein, with its aim of a united Ireland, is to join an assembly in Belfast. The peace, so devoutly sought, has brought with it a new edge of uncertainty. The concept of Britishness, once so clear, is blurred.

Further north, the mood is different. On the eve of another World Cup campaign, Scottish nationalism has grown at the expense of Britishness. The resounding vote for a Scottish parliament has emphasised the separateness

of a nation in tune with the mood of its people.

For a Scot, it seems, the wider the distance between Westminster and Edinburgh the better; and maybe independence is the best way of securing that. Recent opinion polls have shown the Scottish Nationalist Party running almost level with Labour. That does not necessarily mean that the Scots are about to abandon membership of the British state. It is just that they are, for the moment, feeling very Scottish.

The Welsh, on the other hand, are finding it hard to know where they stand. The vote for devolution was tantalisingly close—just 7,000 votes separated the Yes supporters from the Noes. The assembly seemed a watered-down affair compared with Scotland's, almost an apology for self-government.

But as the Welsh have come to terms with their new status, so they have begun to appreciate it more. There is much jostling for assembly seats, the introduction of cabinet-style government, ideas for a new Welsh flag. And with all this a



Tony Blair campaigning for a Welsh assembly: without the Celtic fringe, will the English feel abandoned?

growing sense that being Welsh, rather than British, is something to be relished.

So where does all this leave the English? Abandoned by the Celtic fringe, they seem to be heading, under a Blair Government, ever closer to Europe. It now appears not so much a question of whether they join a single currency, but when. For Eurosceptics, that means a yet-further dilution of their British nationality, leaving them having to think, for the first time, about being

English rather than simply the most influential part of Great Britain.

A fascinating documentary, *Our Friends in the South*, shown on Scottish Television last week, called England "the biggest stateless nation in Europe". "They are having an identity crisis," said Jeremy Paxman.

John Major encapsulated the problem: "I'm an Englishman by birth, but with a British identity." Others disagreed. "I'm a Geordie from

Newcastle," said most of the shoppers canvassed in the city's MetroCentre. "On balance, I'm a mild English nationalist," said Lord Rees-Mogg, "though I do regard them as eccentric people."

"British," said his son, Jacob. "I'm English," said Teresa Gorman.

Trevor Phillips, prospective candidate for mayor of London, introduced a new element when he said: "There are Scottish Britons, Welsh Britons, Northern Britons,

and now there are black Britons." The last may feel affection for Britain, but they have little affinity with white English nationalists.

A year of Labour Government has landed the British identity in a cultural melting pot. "How all this will resolve itself," notes the historian Linda Colley, "remains to be seen. What seems indisputable is that a substantial rethinking of what it means to be British can no longer be evaded."

Poll popularity knows no bounds

By Peter Riddell

TONY BLAIR and his Government have achieved the rare feat of being even more popular after 12 months in office than when first elected.

No matter what the row or the allegation, the Government has continued to enjoy record support. Having thrown out the Tories after 18 years, the public believes Labour should be given the chance to prove itself. A MORI poll for *The Times* in late March put Labour on 53 per cent, against 28 per cent for the Tories and 14 per cent for the Liberal Democrats.

Even though some other polls show different and, in the case of ICM, lower figures, the underlying trends are the same. The one blemish for Mr Blair is that he has lost support among young people. While the public generally has swung 9 per cent in his favour over the past year, 18- to 24-year olds have swung 3 per cent against him.

Mr Blair's popularity rating has risen most sharply among those aged over 55. Overall satisfaction with the way that he is doing his job has yet to fall below 60 per cent in any month since May 1997. No Prime Minister since Eden in 1955-56 has done this in his first year.

In a detailed analysis, Simon Atkinson and Roger Mortimore of MORI note that such ratings have been achieved for shorter periods by previous Prime Ministers.

Harold Wilson, in his first year of 1964-65, topped 60 per cent several times, and even John Major achieved this twice (in his first two months, during the Gulf conflict).

More unprecedented, the analysts argue, is that five times in the past year, more than 50 per cent of the public have been satisfied with the performance of the Government, as opposed to Mr Blair. That mark was last surpassed, once, by the Attlee Government. Mr Blair's average approval rating of 67 per cent compares with an average first-year rating of 54 per cent for Prime Ministers from Attlee to Wilson's first term.

Mr Atkinson and Mr Mortimore point out that the history of the Thatcher and Major Governments shows that a new administration has a definite shelf-life. In both 1979 and 1992, the Tories got off on the wrong foot and were quickly behind in the polls, while, in 1983 and 1987, they remained at around their post-election rating for some time, before their popularity fell after 18 months.

This points to mid-term blues, beginning in November 1998, though the Tories recovered from their slumps in 1985-86 and 1989-91 to win the subsequent general elections. It all depends on whether Mr Blair can defy the pattern of political gravity.

Laying down law, page 22

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LABOUR'S FIRST YEAR



CHRIS SMITH will upstage his Cabinet colleagues next week by celebrating the first anniversary of Labour's election victory with the publication of a book that will be the definitive guide to "Cool Britannia".

Pop and fashion knock high art off its pedestal

culture, has embraced the new "cool" concept. After the onslaught of Gerald Kaufman's Commons committee, opera lovers must be wondering what future the form has under Labour.

Andrew Pierce and Carol Midgley on Chris Smith's cultural revolution

as *The Full Monty*, *Wilde* and *Bean* have exceeded their producers' wildest ambitions. Sir Terence Conran cushions and throws are now deemed the favourite style of furnishings for summits between Mr Blair and European leaders.

photographed with the Beatles — the Government has discovered Labour's hives are an unforgetting lot. The theatre director Sir Peter Hall and the conductor Sir Simon Rattle, who were among the first to cheer the new Government on May 1, also led the way in branding "Cool Britannia" a figleaf to cover cuts in arts subsidies.

tune. The *New Musical Express*, which supported the Red Wedge movement, said the public had been cheated. Ian Braadie, of The Lightning Seeds, said: "They are different from the Tories, but I don't think it's enough. It is like a different bloke in charge of the same board."

TOMORROW

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Tibetan hunger strike stopped

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

INDIAN police broke up a 48-day hunger strike by three Tibetan exiles yesterday, days before they were likely to die of starvation. Three others were left to continue their fast, apparently after police were intimidated by the screaming of 50 Buddhist nuns protesting at their late-night intervention.

The six protesters, lying in a tent pitched on a pavement in central Delhi, have been demanding intervention by the United Nations to free Tibet from Chinese control. Buddhist supporters had arrived in large number hours before the police raid.

The youngest of three protesters taken to hospital, Karma Sichoe, 25, was in intensive care after allegedly being handled roughly by police despite his acute weakness.

Boy, 14, accused of killing teacher at school dance

From Tom Rhodes in Washington

A TEENAGER known as Satan by his fellow classmates has been charged as an adult after he opened fire at a high school graduation dance in Pennsylvania, killing a science master and injuring two pupils and another teacher.

The incident, which took place at Nick's Place, a banquet hall in Edinboro, left the small rural community in a state of shock yesterday as the town became yet another statistic in the growing catalogue of school violence throughout the United States.

"This is not the sort of place you expect something like this to happen," said Kip Allen, the town's mayor. "We've never had anything like this before."

Andrew Wurst, 14, a pupil at Parker Middle School, had been late in joining the graduation dance, whose theme had been "I Had the Time of My Life". He first shot and killed John Gillette, a science teacher



John Gillette: died after being hit in the head

who was standing outside the hall. Mr Gillette, a married father of three children and the dance's chief organiser, was hit in the head.

The teenager then walked inside and fired a volley of bullets from the .25 calibre pistol, apparently stolen from his father, as the guests

swayed to the final melody, Celine Dion's *My Heart Will Go On* from *Titanic*, the Hollywood blockbuster.

Sobbing girls in satin dresses and their terrified boy-friends huddled outside the hall as the shooting started. Others hid in a cupboard before Wurst fled. He was caught in a field behind the hall.

A month earlier, according to two pupils, he had joked of killing people and then committing suicide. One friend said Wurst had earned the nickname of Satan for his obsessional following of Marilyn Manson, the pop star who employs satanic iconography.

Wurst had not known Mr Gillette, 48, and did not seem to be targeting two other 14-year-olds, one of whom was shot in the foot and another grazed on the abdomen, or a female teacher who was touched by a bullet.

He has been charged with criminal homicide, three counts of aggravated assault and reckless endangerment. He also faces drug charges for possession of marijuana.



Parents comfort pupils after the shooting. The murder is the latest in a catalogue of high school violence

Last year, three students were killed in a shooting at a high school in West Paducah, Kentucky and two were murdered and seven wounded at another school in Pearl, Mississippi.

Colonel David Grossman, an authority on violence and a consultant to the Pentagon, said television, Hollywood

and video arcades had become primary factors in the brutalisation of young Americans.

Born Menefee, whose daughter was killed in the Mississippi killings, said each new shooting brought a sense of inadequacy to the relatives of previous victims.

In a separate incident, police in Greensboro, North Carolina, reported that a four-year-old boy who found a loaded .38 calibre semi-automatic in a handbag had shot and killed Carlos Gilmer, a six-year-old playmate who had been celebrating his birthday on Saturday.

Starr interrogates First Lady again over Whitewater

By Tom Rhodes in Washington

HILLARY CLINTON was questioned for five hours by Kenneth Starr at the White House as the independent prosecutor considered whether to indict her on charges that she lied about her legal work in Arkansas.

The interview on Saturday — the sixth time the US President's wife has been questioned by Mr Starr's office — was held in the Yellow Room and centred on her work for Madison Guaranty, the bank at the centre of the Whitewater land deal.

The interview came exactly two weeks before the federal grand jury in Little Rock is due to stand down. The length of the interview and the key associates Mr Starr chose to accompany him suggested he was ready to make a decision on whether to pursue charges. Prosecutors are trying to establish whether Mrs Clinton testified truthfully about her business dealings with Madison and its co-owners, Susan McDougal and her husband, James, who died last month.

Mr Starr's Whitewater inquiry was given a fillip in February when Jim Guy Tucker, President Clinton's successor as Governor in Arkansas, agreed to become a

co-operating witness. Mr Tucker is believed to have provided information relating to Mrs Clinton's involvement in Castle Grande, a large development project.

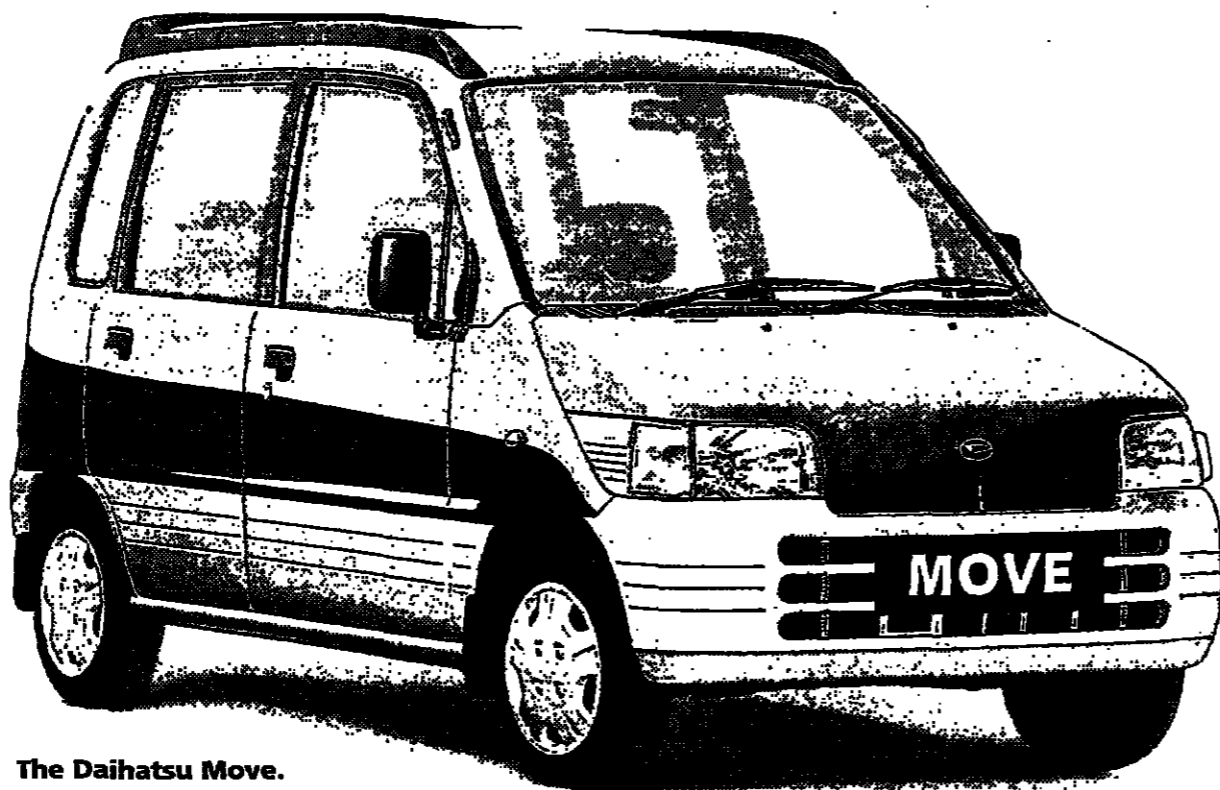
Mrs Clinton has said that she remembered few details of the scheme but billing records from her partnership, the Rose Law Firm, indicated a much deeper knowledge.

After Saturday's interview, Mrs Clinton joined her husband at the annual White House Correspondents' Association dinner, a ritual lent a peculiar twist this year with the appearance of Paula Jones as a guest of the conservative magazine, *Insight*. Mrs Jones is appealing against the dismissal of her sexual harassment suit against the President.

The President, as has become tradition, joked about the past year but received few laughs when claiming to have been blissfully unaware of the past few months' events. "I have been so busy I haven't read a newspaper or magazine or watched the evening news since the Pope went to Cuba. What have you been writing about?" he said, alluding to the investigation into his alleged affair with Monica Lewinsky, a White House trainee.

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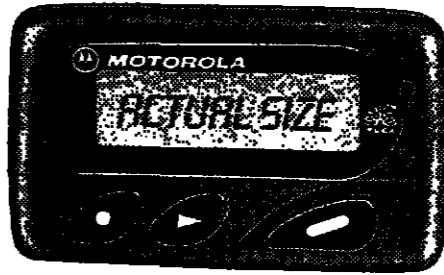
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How I helped to blow up the King David Hotel



Spy tells Christopher Walker his role in creating the State of Israel

THE murderous terror attacks that eroded Britain's resolve to continue its Mandate over Palestine had hastened the creation of Israel, were assisted by a Jewish spy operating inside British military headquarters in Jerusalem.

Now 81, but possessing an uncanny recall of those turbulent years, David Shalom Rubovitz told *The Times* in an exclusive interview that he felt no remorse, and that he had advised leaders of the Stern Gang, the most bloodthirsty of the Jewish terror groups, to step up their campaign against British targets.

"I knew the mentality of the British. You had to strike at them physically," said the former mole who was in charge of the transport section at British headquarters in the King David Hotel from 1945 until discharged in 1948, as his papers show, "due to the closing down of this HQ".

Mr Rubovitz, whose undercover role has been confirmed by senior Jewish underground sources, spoke in impeccable English in his cramped flat in the religious Tel Aviv suburb of Bnei Brak. "I knew that the British would not want to sacrifice their lives and the lives of their men for either the Arabs or the Jews."

His claims about Britain's declining will to continue the Mandate for Palestine begun in 1922 — in which the territory was placed under British administration by the

League of Nations — is confirmed by many historians. Mr Rubovitz, a mild-mannered man with an infectious laugh, makes an unlikely spy. He was recruited to Lehi, the Hebrew acronym for the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel — one of whose most ruthless leaders was Yitzhak Shamir, the future right-wing Prime Minister, — by a 16-year-old girl, Yael Ben-Dov.

"She arrived at my house early one morning and persuaded me to use my place on the vital seventh floor of the King David to bring about the humiliation and departure of

the British imperial power," recalled Mr Rubovitz. He had the codename "Yigal" and in 1981 was presented with the Defence Ministry medal awarded by Menachem Begin, then Prime Minister and formerly leader of the rival IZL (Irgun) terrorist group.

Mr Rubovitz disclosed how he operated without ever attracting British suspicion. "Whenever I came across an interesting statement — particularly in the classified fortnightly intelligence reports to which I had easy access — I used to copy it on the spot... I

would later meet Yael at various places away from the eyes of the British and give her the information."

The spy, who still carries discharge papers describing his conduct as exemplary and his work for the British forces as "very satisfactory", remains bitter about Britain's conduct and the alleged bias of many Mandate officials against the Jews. "I am happy you British went," he said. "You never did anything good here."

He said that by far the most important document which he copied was a fortnightly report which appeared in September 1946, two months after the horrific IZL bomb attack on the King David using booby-trapped milk churns, which killed 91 people, 28 of them Britons. It contained an assessment which he can still quote verbatim: "(a) The constant murderous attacks of Stern may, if increased, cause His Majesty's Government to reconsider their position in the country; (b) There is no doubt that this gang is the most dangerous element in the Middle East that our forces have to face."

Mr Rubovitz said that the circulation of this intelligence assessment did much to boost the morale of the Stern fight-

ers. "When I gave it to Yael to be passed on to the Stern commanders, then living under cover in Tel Aviv, I made the point to them that he who tired first would be the loser." A year later the British were on their way home.

Asked why he had chosen to discuss his role, Mr Rubovitz — who knew in advance about the King David attack, which also killed 41 Arabs and 17 Jews — said: "I think people in Britain and Israel are entitled to know, once and for all, one of the main reasons why the British Government quit Palestine when it did and the Jewish state was established."

Mr Rubovitz also played a crucial role in Lehi's assassination of the Swedish UN mediator, Count Folke Bernadotte, gunned down in Jerusalem on September 17, 1948 only days after presenting a revised blueprint to solve the Jewish-Arab conflict. In a chilling revelation not previously published, Mr Rubovitz handed me the photograph of the languid-looking Count that he showed to the killers a few days before the attack.

The plan would have partitioned Palestine, giving Jerusalem and the Negev to Jordan, and allowed Israel to keep western Galilee. "He was a British stooge who wanted to give Jerusalem to King Abdullah of Jordan," Mr Rubovitz said, looking at the old print without a hint of compassion. "He had to be killed. There was no alternative."



Jewish refugees from war-ravaged Europe arriving on board a packed ship in Haifa just weeks before the declaration of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948



David Rubovitz: "I am happy you British went"

Sanctions to remain despite Iraqi threats

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A SERIES of recent Iraqi threats will fall on deaf ears today when the United Nations Security Council meets to renew the oil embargo on the country because of lack of progress in UN weapons inspections.

The 15-nation council will hear a direct appeal for an early end to the sanctions from two top Iraqi ministers at a closed-door session chaired by Russia, amid Baghdad's warnings that failure to lift them could provoke a new crisis.

But the UN will have before it a report by Richard Butler, chief UN inspector, complaining that there has been virtually no progress over the past six months in verifying that Iraq has abandoned efforts to acquire biological and chemical weapons and ballistic missiles.

In recent days Iraq's Cabinet has said its enemies would pay a heavy price if sanctions

dragged on, and a joint meeting of the ruling Baath Party leadership and the Revolutionary Command Council has warned that sanctions could precipitate a new crisis.

On top of that, the government-run newspaper *al-Jumhuriya* said on Saturday that Iraq was "adamant on breaking the embargo this year if it is not lifted by the Security Council". Tariq Aziz, the Deputy Prime Minister, fired off an angry 22-page letter to the Security Council last week, saying Mr Butler's report "contains a large volume of tremendous and flagrant fallacies and lies".

However, diplomats say the sanctions, imposed after Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, are certain to remain, stirring fears that the deal for access to Iraq's presidential sites could collapse.

Letters, page 23

Ross leads new push for peace

A CRITICAL new round of US shuttle diplomacy, designed to secure a breakthrough at next week's Middle East peace talks in London, began over the weekend (Christopher Walker writes).

Dennis Ross, the US special envoy, and Martin Indyk, a senior State Department expert, attempted to secure advance agreement to a US blueprint designed to end the 13-month deadlock in peace negotiations.

The blueprint calls for a 13 per cent withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank, but so far Binyamin Netanyahu, the Israeli Prime Minister, has only agreed to 11 per cent, while the Palestinians want a further 30 per cent of West Bank land to be handed over to their control.

Mr Netanyahu and Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, are to have separate meetings with Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State, in London on May 4.

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Nature reserve threatened by tide of poison

SPANISH authorities yesterday battled to prevent tons of highly toxic mining waste from flooding into Europe's biggest natural park and its most important wetland breeding ground for birds — the Coto de Doñana in southwest Spain.

Most of the five million cubic metres of poisonous floodwater was yesterday being diverted through canals around the park, home to a quarter of a million nesting birds. But as the tide began to rise last night there were fears that the highly acidic waste would break through.

Authorities used gates and dams to divert the poisoned water, which escaped on Saturday from a reservoir at a mine on the River Guadamar, into the neighbouring River Guadalquivir. They hoped the fast-flowing Guadalquivir, which runs along the park's southern boundary, would both dilute the waste and flush it out to sea.

Isabel Tocmo, Spain's Environment Minister, said yesterday that she thought Doñana, declared a World Heritage Site by the United Nations in 1994, was now safe from immediate contamination, but she promised the long-term effects would be watched carefully. She called on police to investigate the disaster and, if necessary, to bring charges.

Spanish authorities race to divert toxic water spilled from mine dam,

writes Giles Tremlett in Aznalcollar

Environmentalists gave a warning that, even if the toxic water was pushed into the Atlantic Ocean, it would still do considerable damage to an area that boasts 125 different bird species including some of the last remaining examples of the Spanish imperial eagle. The spillage's effects could be felt far from Doñana, a stop-over point for more than a million migrating birds from northern Europe in the winter. "We also have to worry now

about the effect on the underground water," said Eva Hernández of Greenpeace.

The wave of thick black waste burnt a trail of destruction through farmland on the upper reaches of the Guadamar, near the town of Aznalcollar. This was where the mine had a dam holding back acidic waste water used in the production of zinc, copper, silver and lead.

Some 5,000 hectares of orchards, rice fields and cotton plantations were coated with the black waste after a large breach was opened in the dam on Saturday morning. Experts said that all plants touched by the toxic water would die. Farmers put immediate losses at about £8 million.

Large stretches of tomato and sunflower fields were stained black by overflowing waters. Orchards, cotton crops and rice paddies were also affected. "I'm ruined," one tomato farmer said. "I've lost my whole crop, my whole livelihood."

Small numbers of dead birds, fish and crabs littered some shores, and local residents said that many more had already been removed.

The mayors of seven towns along the Guadamar warned citizens not to drink from ground wells. Sheep and cattle owners were told to keep livestock away from the river. The fishing industry was also expected to suffer losses.

Environmentalists said that some of the metals would inevitably find their way into the delicate Doñana eco-system — which could have serious consequences for plankton, which are basic elements in the food chain, and for birds' eggs. Doñana,



A lorry passes the toxic waste floods with a load of rocks to seal the breached dam

Marshland is sanctuary for migrant birds

By Ernest Garcia

THE major contamination of the River Guadamar could hardly have happened in a worse place. The river feeds large tracts of the immense marshlands of the Coto Doñana National Park before joining the River Guadalquivir near its estuary.

The park protects 579 sq miles of natural wilderness. The marshland sediments, highly vulnerable to long-term damage by toxic wastes, support great densities of invertebrates and small fish which are preyed upon by aquatic birds.

At this time of year Spain's finest heronries are sited in cork oaks on their periphery. Thousands of little egrets and cattle egrets are on their nests with night herons and numbers of the elsewhere-rare squacco herons. The colonies are the avian equivalent of high-rise blocks of flats, every fork and twig-cluster laden by the birds' stick nests. The top levels are reserved for the grey herons and the white storks. A colony of spoonbills here is one of only three in Spain and glossy ibises have only recently returned to breed. Several great white egrets, a species unknown as a breeder in Spain until 1997, are in Doñana at the moment, raising the possibility that they, too, will breed there in the future. Reedbeds shelter important colonies of purple herons, and breeding little bitterns are widespread.

Doñana's wetlands are home to nesting populations of aquatic birds extremely scarce elsewhere in

Europe. Marbled ducks, ferruginous ducks and crested coots head the list but any visiting ornithologists will be impressed by the numbers of red-crested pochards, purple gallinules, slender-billed gulls, whiskered terns and gull-billed terns — and their attendant predators, the marsh harriers, red and black kites and booted and short-toed eagles.

The resident 15 pairs of Spanish imperial eagles are 10 per cent of the global population of this impressive raptor, which is confined to the Iberian peninsula.

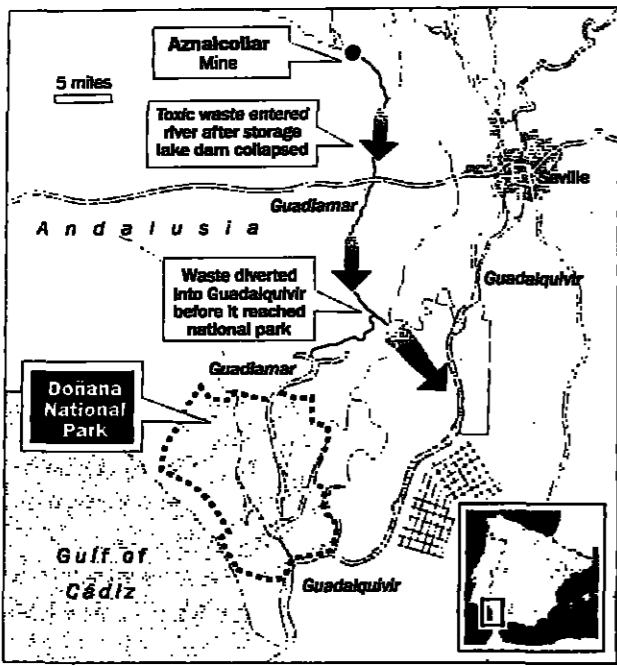
More than half their prey are waterbirds and so they would be seriously affected by any large decline. However, the significance of the reserve is greatest as a refuge for wintering waterfowl and passage wading birds. Sixty-thousand greylag geese cross Europe to winter there.

In recent years marshland birds have had to overcome outbreaks of botulism and have resisted poisoning by pesticides. The present threat is more serious, having long-term implications for the food chains that will affect not only waterbirds but also flora, amphibians and reptiles and even the indigenous Spanish lynx.

Dr Ernest Garcia is a biologist with a particular interest in Iberian birds. He was at Doñana on April 10 and is the author, with Andrew Paterson, of Where to Watch Birds in Southern Spain, 1994 ABC Black.



Rare spoonbill is under threat



once a private hunting ground for kings and aristocrats, remained virtually untouched by man until the middle of this century. In the 1960s experts from Britain's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds helped to draw up a plan to turn 185,000 acres into the national park. Tourism, mod-

ern agriculture and industry all now present a threat to the area, home to one of the few remaining groups of Iberian lynx. Some 20,000 birds died in the area in 1986 as a result of what was believed to be pesticide poisoning. Anders Bülow, president of

the Canadian mining company involved, said that his company was doing everything it could to limit the environmental impact (Richard Cleroux writes from Ottawa). Mr Bülow heads Boliden Ltd, a Toronto company that moved to Canada from Sweden 14 months ago.

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Kohl's sun sets in the East as far Right prospers from despair

Helmut Kohl, the Chancellor of German unity, has lost the East.

Once hailed as a hero by the east Germans, he is now shunned by voters. In Saxony-Anhalt elections yesterday his Christian Democrats dropped by 12 per cent. The Social Democrats won and probably — for want of choice — will have to work out a grand coalition with the Christian Democrats in the Magdeburg parliament.

But the most disturbing element yesterday was the sudden rise of the far Right, the German People's Union which won almost 11 per cent of the vote. Disillusion with Herr Kohl, and with Bonn

INSIDE GERMANY



BY ROGER BOYES

ical class. All the signs are that the plunge in support for the Christian Democrats will be repeated throughout eastern Germany. And to lose the East is to lose the general election in September.

This is the decisive month for Herr Kohl. Younger Christian Democrat deputies have approached a Kohl confidant — Rudolf Seiters, the former Interior Minister — and urged him to persuade the leader to step down. Herr Seiters refused.

However, a dismal result in Saxony-Anhalt is sure to provide new fuel for the conspirators. The timetable is tight. The euro summit which could become Herr Kohl's end-of-term prizewinners'

ceremony is on May 2. A fortnight later comes the party conference in Bremen. Two weeks for the rebels to persuade Herr Kohl that the election is lost unless he makes way for his right-hand man Wolfgang Schäuble. Two weeks for the Bavarian Christian Social Union to do its utmost to block such a move. It has no love of Herr Schäuble.

The trend in the East has been apparent for more than two years, yet the Christian Democrats watched passively as support ebbed away. East German voters do not have fixed party allegiances. Herr Kohl was rewarded for his achieve-

ment in merging the two German states and for his gesture in exchanging at a rate of 1:1 the Ostmark for the Deutschemark.

His promise of creating a blossoming landscape in the East, however, failed to impress. On the campaign trail last week Herr Kohl appeared to talk a different language from his listeners. Again and again he put the success of German unification in a ten-year perspective. Functioning telephones, full supermarkets, flashy cars, flower tubs on station platforms, shopping malls with piped music, travel agencies offering cut price tours to Madeira: all were unthinkable in 1988. But voters, and

above all voters still somewhat remote from a multiparty system, do not think in ten-year perspectives.

The East is young and large chunks of yesterday's voters were barely 12 years old when Germany was unified. As a result, the five states in the East — Saxony-Anhalt, Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Saxony and Thuringia — have become single-issue politics. That issue being, of course, jobs.

Yesterday's election reflected this concern. Saxony-Anhalt has an unemployment rate of 23.4 per cent and the slowest growth rate in the East. Yet the Social Democrats who dominate the Government were not punished.

Voters believed the claims of Reinhold Höppner, the Prime Minister, that he had succeeded in attracting foreign investment. Instead they blamed Bonn and Herr Kohl. Where were the jobs? Where was the prosperity?

Concentration on unemployment explains why the eastern German electorate is so uncertain. The Social Democrats benefited from the choice of Gerhard Schröder as rival to Herr Kohl. He is seen as a pragmatist. East Germans distrust visionaries and they distrust the euro.

The Christian Democrats can survive in the East only by distancing themselves

from Herr Kohl. That act is performed most competently by Kurt Biedenkopf, the Prime Minister of Saxony. Professor Biedenkopf came out firmly against the euro on Friday. He was the only regional premier to vote against the new currency in the upper chamber.

One of the more unpleasant, less heroic features of civil society in the former Soviet bloc was a readiness to seek out scapegoats. It was a symptom of powerlessness and of popular anger. That vitriol lingers on in the East. It generates distrust of foreigners, of the European Commission but above all it is turning the people against the Chancellor.

Teenage Kosovo gunrunners killed in Serb ambush

FROM TOM WALKER IN KOSARÉ

VILLAGERS on Kosovo's mountainous border with Albania have described how teenage gunrunners fled for their lives down wooded valleys and ridges, under heavy fire from Serbian police and Yugoslav Army units.

One family in Kosare hamlet woke to find two survivors of the attack, which claimed at least 19 lives, at their door. One had dived into a river to escape a hail of bullets; the other had been beaten, but spared execution by one of many young Yugoslav soldiers with little stomach for war in Kosovo.

Some of the 19 victims were buried yesterday but Serbian police blocked access to the funeral.

There had been scepticism about the Serbian media's account of the clash, which handily coincided with last week's referendum on whether to allow foreign mediation in the crisis. But witness accounts tally with the army's description of untrained but heavily armed teenagers being routed by the security forces, among whom there is growing optimism that the so-called Kosovo Liberation Army is almost beaten.

Kosare consists of eight stone houses clinging to steep meadows and forests beneath Mount Skekzen inside Albania. "It was a disaster," said an unusually frank Albanian woman of the clash — described by the Kosovo Albanian propaganda machine as a state-sponsored slaughter of innocent refugees trying to return to their homeland.

"The boys showed up in the middle of the night. They were so young; one of them was soaked to the skin, he had been swimming. The other's face was covered in blood ... They were in a complete state of shock — they said all their friends were dead."

The two had gone quickly, using darkness to continue towards their villages in the Decane region, at the foot of the mountain range between Pec and Dakovica. Out of 200 who had attempted to cross that night, she suspected more than 19 had been killed. All their weapons had been dropped in the woods, she added.

One fleeing group had taken a wooded ridge to safety, another had dashed into a gorge beneath a zig-zagging military road — where they met a bloody end in a police

and army ambush. A captain, his soldiers apparently at ease deep in supposedly hostile territory, said he believed the border was now secure, but would not admit being involved in the notorious clash.

The army's widespread deployment in Kosovo has added an unpredictable dimension to the crisis. Many conscripts, especially those from Montenegro, have no interest in fighting Albanians. Uniforms have been dumped outside barracks.

Serbian police, however, still carry distinct menace. "If it wasn't for the media war, we'd have this lot cleared up in two days," said an officer on yet another new checkpoint on the road north from Dakovica, the supply line to a "ring of steel" closing in on what the Serbs believe is the last large pocket of Albanian resistance.

□ **Pristina:** The Yugoslav Army yesterday reported new border skirmishes, saying it ambushed about ten separatists, who opened fire that morning on army border guards near Gorazup, having ignored orders to halt. There were no reports of casualties. (Reuters)



Delacroix: the face on a 100-franc banknote

Delacroix 'cut like salami' in French exhibition

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

A new exhibition of works by Eugène Delacroix, to mark the bicentenary of the painter's birth, has been condemned as an expensive fiasco by critics, who claim that the great French artist has not been accorded the display he deserves.

Just 2,300 people a day visited the exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris during its first week. The Grand Palais collection, which



Devalued: a detail from the 19th century artist's revolutionary painting, Liberty Leading the People

opened on April 10, is one of ten Delacroix exhibitions around the country. Critics say that by dispersing the painter's works the organisers have missed the opportunity to mount a truly memorable show.

"Such a grand palace for such a small exhibition," the news magazine *L'Événement du Jeudi* complained, pointing out that the show includes just 88 paintings and 33 drawings.

The exhibition cost more than £1 million to assemble,

and needs 30,000 visitors a day to balance the books. "Only a massive exhibition would have been worthy of Delacroix. Instead they cut him up like a salami, and only the last slice has been kept," the magazine said.

The critic Nicole Duault, writing yesterday in *Le Journal du Dimanche*, said that "everything seems to have been done to turn this Delacroix show into a fiasco ... It would have seemed so logical to organise a single retrospective around the masterpieces

at the Louvre." Visiting the five Paris exhibitions, not to mention the others at Rouen, Chantilly, Saint-Maurice, Bayonne and Tours, would be beyond the budget of many art-lovers.

"So much for making culture accessible to the masses," the current hobbyhorse of Culture Minister Catherine Trautmann." Duault thundered. She mockingly suggested that a Delacroix railcard.

The leading exponent of romanticism in French art,

Delacroix, born on April 26, 1798, remains enduringly popular in France, and his self-portrait and famous revolutionary painting *Liberty Leading the People* adorn the 100-franc note.

Notoriously impervious to criticism, Delacroix would have rejected the idea that the quality of an exhibition could be measured by the number of people paying to see it.

□ **Delacroix:** les dernières années (Delacroix, the last years) 1850-1863, at the Grand Palais until July 28.

Lebed in make or break poll bid

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

VOTERS in the vast Siberian region of Krasnoyarsk were yesterday deciding the political future of Aleksandr Lebed, the former general and one-time ally of President Yeltsin, who is now one of his bitterest opponents.

General Lebed, 48, is challenging Valeri Zubov, the incumbent governor, in provincial elections. If he wins, he will gain control of a mighty industrial base — producing almost all Russia's nickel, platinum and aluminium — from which to launch his campaign for the Russian presidency in 2000. But if he loses, political obscurity is likely, a fact he acknowledges.

The latest opinion polls put General Lebed and Mr Zubov neck and neck. But with six other contenders neither is expected to gain the necessary overall majority in the poll. The contest would then be decided by a run-off in two weeks' time.

General Lebed, a former paratroop commander, took up politics in 1995. The following year he came third behind Mr Yeltsin and Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist leader, in the first round of the presidential elections and then helped ensure Mr Yeltsin's victory by supporting him in the second round.

Mr Yeltsin rewarded him by appointing him his national security adviser and secretary of the policy-making Security Council — only to dismiss him four months later, after accusing him of plotting a "creeping coup".

Italian scholars call for Latin renaissance

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME



Cicero: model writer in Latin for all Europeans

CLASSICAL scholars launched a last-ditch campaign at the weekend to reverse the decline of Latin and Greek in Italian schools, as the Pope acknowledged that Latin was almost extinct even within the Vatican, and an epigram competition in Rome drew almost no Latin entries.

Seventy classicists and philologists gathered at Naples for a conference on how to revive the study of Latin and Greek in schools through "new teaching methods".

"It is not enough to read the classics in translation," said a statement by the organisers, the Accademia Vivarium Novum, Salerno University, and the Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies. "We need to learn Latin and Greek in order to understand the roots of Western civilisation."

The Pope, addressing the Vatican synod of Asian bishops, noted with alarm that a survey had revealed that most bishops used English. Only one participant spoke or wrote Latin. "I suppose the principle

that Latin is the official language of the Church is thereby preserved," the pontiff noted with mordant humour.

Across the Tiber, in Piazza Navona in the heart of Baroque Rome, Francesco Rutelli, the mayor, noted that although he had invited citizens to compose witty epigrams in either Italian or Latin, "I suppose the principle

Latin and post them on notice boards in the square, almost all the submissions were in Roman dialect, and "only one or two" in Latin. The epigram competition is a revival of a 16th century spring festival held on the day of St Mark the Evangelist, in which students hung subversive poems (many mocking the then Papal regime) on a statue nicknamed Pasquino, which still stands just off the piazza.

Latin was dropped from the Roman Catholic liturgy during the reforming Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, when it was also abolished in the *scuola media*, which all Italians attend between 11 and 14.

Last year Monsignor Carlo Egger, the Vatican's chief Latinist, published a dictionary of modern terms in Latin — the *Lexicon Recentis Latinitatis* — to bring the language of Horace and Ovid up to date.

He told the Naples conference he hoped Latin would become "the common language of a united Europe". "All Europeans should be able to write letters like Cicero," he said.

Il Messaggero, the Rome daily, said Latin was "a language for all seasons whose heritage is very much alive ... when we use words like *quorum*, *referendum*, *facsimile* or *stadium*, we are using Latin".

Professor Enzo Mandruzzato, who teaches Latin at Padua University and is the author of *The Pleasure of Latin* said any European who "considers himself to be educated" should know Latin.

La Repubblica said: "The classicists can make as much noise as they like, but the fact is that no one is going to speak to their dentist or plumber in Latin."

Steady decline since 1960s

THERE has been a steady decline in British schoolchildren studying Latin since Oxford and Cambridge scrapped the language as an entry requirement in 1960 (David Charter writes).

About 60,000 teenagers sat Latin O Level annually in the 1950s. By 1970 this had fallen to 41,528, and by 1985 the figure was down to 19,928.

The Latin GCSE was taken by 14,254 students in 1990, 12,952 in 1995 and 11,673 last

summer. Dr Peter Jones, spokesman for the National Co-ordinating Committee for Classics, said he thought Latin had "ridden the worst".

The national curriculum had become more flexible and the virtues of Latin were becoming more widely understood. "Just under 10,000 students are doing something classical at university, whether it is Latin, Greek, classical studies or ancient history, and this number is rising."

Fossett changes tack to balloon round world

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

STEVE FOSSETT is making a fourth attempt to become the first balloonist to circumnavigate the globe — taking a southern route from South America and flying largely over water to avoid Libya.

The millionaire American commodities trader, who holds the world distance record of 10,361 miles, plans to set off from Argentina in August. His trip in *Solo Spirit* should take 18 days, crossing Paraguay and Brazil, the Atlantic Ocean to South Africa, the Indian and Pacific

oceans to Australia, then back to Latin America.

"He will be flying over water 80 per cent of the way, which results in more stable wind patterns," said Tim Cole, his chief engineer. "Plus, there will be fewer political and military problems because he'll fly over

only five countries." Mr Fossett, 54, has set off from St Louis, Missouri, before, only to be thwarted twice by Libya's delay in granting flight clearance. Libya objects to United Nations-imposed air-travel sanctions over its refusal to release two Lockerbie bombing suspects.

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CHRISTOPHER REEVE: MY STORY

The night I thought I was going to die

On June 28 I was taken to the Kessler Institute to begin the long process of preparing to go home. I no longer needed to be in intensive care, but I still required a great deal of help and attention. I had an infection in my lungs and had lost a lot of weight because I couldn't eat. Although I absorbed 2,000 calories from a gastrostomy tube every night, it was not enough to keep me from looking gaunt. My body, devastated by the injury, was still very fragile.

One night my breathing tube popped off. I couldn't take a breath. It was nearly midnight, the alarm on my ventilator was screaming and I was making clicking noises — always a signal for "I need air". The security guard came in and asked: "Are you all right, Mr Reeve?" He could have turned on the light and tried to find the source of the disconnect, but rather than get involved he went down the hall to look for a nurse. By then I was starting to pass out.

As the air left my body, I felt a tingling first in my knees and then in my chest. And then, terrified that no one would come, I lost even more air by thrashing around as panic took hold of me.

The nurses' station was about 60ft from my room, and they had many patients to attend to. What if nobody at the station was paying attention? The security guard outside my door either couldn't or wouldn't help me. I joked that I always checked the footwear of the nurses on duty to make sure they were wearing trainers — I wanted them to be able to race down the hall without slipping.

The panic was a reflection of my general state of mind. In fact, the nurses are always alert to "pop-offs" with vent patients. When one occurs they come charging down the halls. I will always remember Janet, one of the senior nurses and definitely the one you'd want in a crisis, if you're having what's called a "code". Janet is very skilled in emergency procedures, but she's a rather large woman. I remember her running down the hall and into my room. As she burst in to come to my rescue, her shoulders and arms would often bump against the walls, and most of the pictures, papers and notes on the bulletin board would bite the dust. The next morning someone would have to help me put the room back together again. But Janet always went right to the source of the problem.

One night a different nurse came in and had trouble finding the light switch. Then she couldn't locate the disconnect. I knew where it was, but I couldn't speak. I tried to point with my hand. She grabbed the ambu bag on the wall and squeezed breath into me by hand while she called for help. Two more nurses arrived, found where the pop-off was and put me back on the vent. These episodes intensified my feelings of utter helplessness.

Over the months I gradually grew accustomed to the pop-offs and they became fairly routine. I began to think of

In the second of three extracts from his autobiography **Christopher Reeve** — the actor best known as Superman — describes the terror he felt when his ventilator was suddenly disconnected, and tells how he learnt to breathe again

them as a metaphor for the entire experience of rehab: you start to realise that you are becoming physically and emotionally stronger and that you can get through more situations than you had thought you could.

The nurses and aides are really psychologists as well. They're the ones who can help you face reality. There was a wonderful Jamaican aide named Juice, whose real name is Glenn Miller. We called him Juice because he made fabulous concoctions in a blender. He's a big man, about 6ft tall, with strong arms and huge hands. He wears steel-rimmed glasses that he is always losing, and he has the biggest smile I've ever seen.

My first time in the shower, as I lay on the stretcher still very frightened, he told me a story: "You think you got it bad? One time we had a lady here who had a spinal cord injury, and the way she got it was she was on the porch of her house and her dog, who was old, went into cardiac arrest. So she started to give mouth-to-mouth to the dog. She closed the dog's mouth and was breathing into his nose. She was so worried about the dog, and she was struggling so hard with the dog to help the dog that she forgot where she was. She fell off the porch and broke her

neck. Then the dog died anyway." I laughed so hard that tears were streaming down my face. All sense of propriety and any compassion for this poor woman went out the window. The worst part was that the story was true, yet I could only find it so ridiculous that I nearly went into convulsions from laughter. Probably my reaction was fuelled by my state of anxiety.

The lady and her dog became a running joke between us. I felt guilty for laughing at it over and over again, but somehow I think it helped me to accept the idea that life is more unpredictable and even more absurd than any of us can imagine. We became very close; Juice has been in the US about 19 years, but he sounds as if he just arrived from the island yesterday. I would ask him: "Why is your accent still so strong?" He always answered: "Cause I don't want to lose my roots."

At one point I said to Juice: "When I leave here, I wish you could come work with me". But he replied: "No. By the time you leave, you're gonna be OK. And my job is... I gotta help. I gotta help a lot of people." That's his mission. That's why he's been there for 14 years earning \$8 (£5) an hour. It's his service; his gift. He always pushed me to do a little more.

Soon I realised that I would have to leave Kessler at some point. A tentative date was set for some time between Thanksgiving [November] and mid-December. I thought: "God, I've totally given up on breathing. So what am I going to do, stay on a ventilator for the rest of my life?"

I announced that on the first Monday of November, I was going to try again to breathe on my own. I remember thinking: "This is it. I don't know where it's going to come from, but I've got to produce some air from some place."

Dr Finley said: "We're going to take you off the ventilator. I want you to try to take ten breaths. If you can only do three, then that's the way it is, but I want you to try for ten. And I'm going to measure how much air you move with each breath, and let's just see where you are, OK?" And I took ten breaths. I was lying on my back on the mat. My head moved up as I struggled to draw in air; I wasn't able to move my diaphragm at all, just my chest, neck, and shoulder muscles in an intense effort to bring some air into my lungs. Over the course of the ten breaths, I was only able to draw in an average of



Christopher Reeve: "I began to think I could be useful to the scientists who were searching for a cure for paralysis"

50cc with each attempt. But at least it was something. I had moved the dial.

We came back the next day, and by then I was really motivated. I prepared myself mentally by imagining my chest as a huge bellows that I could open and close at will. I told myself over and over again that I was going home soon and that I couldn't leave without making some real progress. Dr Finley asked me to take another ten breaths for a comparison with yesterday's numbers. I took the ten breaths, and my average for each one was 450cc. They couldn't believe it. I thought to myself: "All right, now we're getting somewhere."

At 3.30pm the next day I was in place and ready to begin, but several members of the team were late. I thought: "Come on; we're going to have discipline here. We've all got to get together if we're going to make this happen". Finally, I was really

taking charge. When Dr Finley arrived, once again he asked me to take ten breaths. This time the average was 560cc per breath. A cheer broke out in the room.

And the next day we met again. All along Dr Finley had been telling me when to breathe. He'd say: "Let it out, and breathe. And let it out, and breathe." But now I suggested that I might do better if I just timed my own breaths when I felt the need for more air. So he took off the hose, and I started again. I was gasping, sucking for air, and my eyes were rolling up in my head. It was a maximum effort, psychologically and physically. But I breathed on my own for seven and a half minutes.

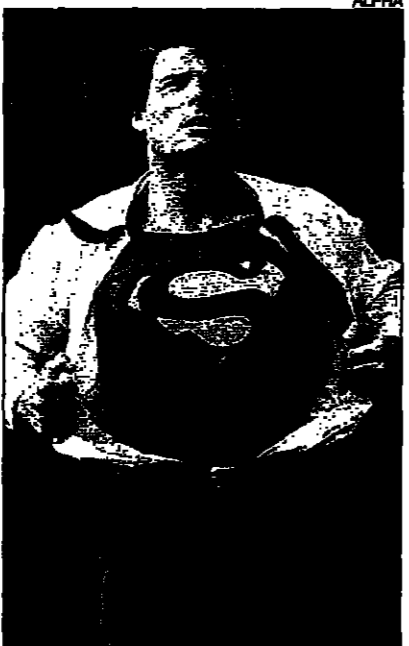
When I got up to the west wing near my room, someone said: "I've never seen

progress like that. You're going to win. You're going to get off this thing." For the first time, I thought it might be possible.

After that, the nurse and I worked alone. Every day we would breathe. I went from seven minutes to 12 to 15. Just before I left Kessler on December 13, I gave it everything I had and breathed for 30 minutes.

Something else happened to me during those months — as therapeutic as any physical progress. When I first came to Kessler, I wanted no part of the disabled population. Gradually, I had come to see that not only was I part of it, but also that I might be able to do something important for all of us. I began to think that I could be useful to the scientists who were searching for a cure for paralysis.

Juice had often told me: "You've been to continued on page 17"



Heroic effort: Reeve as Superman



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Thinking outside the box

Terror of the unknown

Acceptance of your condition is an essential first step in rehab. Ordinary functions are now completely different. For example, every couple of nights you need to take a shower. The prospect absolutely terrified me: what if something happened to the vent while I was in the shower? What if water got into the trach or the tube from the ventilator to the opening in my throat?

They put a special stretcher under the bed, rolled the bed away and placed me in a kind of net. Once again I felt I can't do this. There's no way. The idea of immersing myself in water petrified me. I kept putting it off, saying: "Just give me a sponge bath. I can't face a shower."

Finally, one night after stalling for a week or two, I agreed to try it. Dana was with me, and she literally had to walk into the shower with me and stay there, just so I could see her and talk to her. I'm not sure what my deepest fear actually was, but my condition made me feel open to every imaginable terror. Each step was a huge and horrific adventure. Juice helped me to work up the courage to go into the shower, then he helped me to work up the courage to sit in a wheelchair. Even that was a frightening prospect.

I had a wheelchair very much like the one I have now. It has six areas of command. To go forward or back, to go to the left or to the right, to go quickly or slowly in this kind of chair, I sip air from a plastic straw or blow into it at various strengths. To be put in the wheelchair, I would have to be lifted out of the bed and then lowered into the chair in a



Reeve with his wife, Dana, before the accident

three-man lift. Three aides would disconnect my vent from the bed, carry me lying straight out, put me in the chair, then reconnect me to the vent on the chair. This meant not breathing for four or five seconds. It didn't realise at the time that the purpose of this technique is to introduce the patient to the experience of breathing on his own.)

I was frightened more than I can say. I was totally dependent on the three aides. What if they didn't reconnect me in time? What if the vent didn't work? Again, my mind would team with all the possibilities of what could go wrong. My first time in the chair, I had a full-blown anxiety attack. I was sitting back and I panicked: I can't be here, can't

do this. Get me out. I can't. I can't. I can't sit back in this chair. I don't trust it. I'm scared.

Dana was with me at the time, and she said she had never seen me in such a state. But I was unable to stop it. Sitting back in the chair made me feel confined. I saw the straps pinning my arms to the rests, the seatbelt, my legs strapped on to the foot pedals. I felt as if I were being put into an electric chair in an execution chamber.

There were six or seven people around me, and I was yelling: "No, no, I can't. Don't do this to me. I can't sit here. I don't feel safe. This thing's going to tip over." I was totally out of control.

I was afraid I wouldn't be able to breathe. I thought that if I sat back, I wouldn't get enough air. I didn't trust the vent on the chair. I was really frantic.

It also took me quite a while to learn to drive it, and I had a number of mishaps in the process. I remember practising one Friday afternoon in the rotunda at Kessler, a large area where I didn't have to negotiate corners or hallways. On one side of this practice area a very pleasant old lady was seated at an upright piano on wheels playing show tunes for a small group of patients, which was a Friday ritual. As she played selections from *The Sound of Music*, *South Pacific* and *The King and I*, I did 360s and worked on speed control on the other side.

Then I decided to head back to my room, feeling quite confident that I could go in a straight line without much difficulty. As I passed by the piano, I must have blown a little too hard; suddenly I swerved to the right, and as she continued to play *Getting to Know You* I hit the piano at full speed and pushed it backwards about 5ft. The intrepid pianist didn't miss a beat. She simply stood up and played on as I apologised profusely and tried to shift my chair into reverse. No one in her audience even raised an eyebrow. Obviously this was a regular occurrence.

I succeeded in backing away and went a little more cautiously down the hallway. After a few weeks I learnt to drive much more responsibly and now I'm so accustomed to the chair that it's like a part of my body.

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CHRISTOPHER REEVE: MY STORY



Reeve's wife, Dana, and his son, Will, help him to move not long after his arrival at the Kessler Institute

'I looked down and saw my body lying on the bed'

The episodes of panic were not entirely baseless. One reason my fears were so great was that I had nearly died a week after I arrived at Kessler, on the night of July 5. I may still have been reacting to the terror of that night.

It began with a drug called Sygen, which many people who are spinal cord injured have been taking, although it hasn't been approved by the authorities. You need to have it flown over from Italy or Switzerland, and it's very expensive. But there is a theory that Sygen helps reduce damage to the spinal cord. Some people who have tried it think it has helped them tremendously, while others say it's done nothing. There is no conclusive proof.

But I was willing to try anything. My family ordered it, and a month's supply arrived from Italy. On the afternoon of July 5, I received my first injection of about 400 milligrams. At about 6.30pm I was in bed. Patty, a nurse, was in the room. I began to feel constriction in my lungs, wheezing, and difficulty breathing. It quickly got worse, and breathing became even harder. Patty went to get a few more nurses and Dr Kirshblum and Dr Green. Before long emergency medical teams from two towns had arrived. I was in anaphylactic shock, and my lungs had shut down. I couldn't breathe.

I realised this was happening, although I could do nothing about it. My heart went away while my blood pressure dropped to about 40 over 20. I had never experienced anything like it. They boosted the oxygen supply to 100 per cent, but I still couldn't take in any air. I was struggling, the doctors were shouting. Everything was closing down. Things seemed more and more surreal as I fought for air. I felt like I was going to drown, the way you feel if you're diving and are down too deep, and you need to make it to the surface but you know you can't. Everything



Baseball and other sporting activities previously played a large part in Reeve's life

around me went grey. I could still hear the people in the room: they were giving me various drugs, arguing about whether it should speed me up or slow me down. They were worrying about a histamine condition I have, known as mastocytosis. Dr Kirshblum took over. Then I had one of the scariest experiences in my life. I had often heard about near-death and out-of-body experiences but had always discounted them. I'd never given any credence to seeing the white light and the tunnel and all those kinds of things. But now something very strange happened to me. I struggled and struggled, fighting for air.

Then, after a while, I couldn't fight anymore. And I clearly recall thinking or perhaps even saying aloud: "I'm sorry, but I have to go now." I remember the words very specifically. Again, I had that feeling of embarrassment because I'd failed. I had fought as hard as I could but hadn't made it. And then I left my body. I was up on the ceiling. There

was no white light, but I looked down and saw my body stretched out on the bed, not moving, while everybody — there were 15 or 20 people, the doctors, the nurses — was working on me. The noise and commotion grew quieter as though someone were gradually turning down the volume. I watched myself lying still and saw everyone swirring around with blood pressure cuffs, stethoscopes, and needles.

A crash cart was there because they had called a code. A decision was made to give me a massive dose of epinephrine. It jump-started my heart and my pulse shot up to some astoundingly high number, maybe 175. Then, with a jolt, I was down from the ceiling and back in my body. My heart was racing, my face turning crimson, my whole body pounding as though my pulse was everywhere. Air started to come back, and I gulped it in. My blood pressure began to rise, and my mind cleared. I was seeing things again from my

normal perspective, from within my body. Sounds were incredibly loud, and everything was chaotic. The epinephrine had got me going again. I was back.

I spent the next three days in intensive care. On the second day I asked to try the Sygen again. I felt that this was a drug that might help me, but if I was unable to use it, it would be a terrible loss. Nobody had ever had an allergic reaction to Sygen before. I wanted to be sure.

With all the doctors and nurses around me, they introduced the drug again. But when I started to feel the wheezing and clamping down in my chest, I had to tell them to stop because I was having the same allergic reaction. They gave me a shot of epinephrine right away, and that was my last experiment with Sygen.

My confidence was shaken by this episode, yet I also felt strengthened by it. Once again, I had survived. The experiences with the shower and the wheelchair had a similar effect. I began to believe that I was safe and that I was improving.

Continued from page 16
the grave two times this year, brother. You're not going there again. You are here for a reason." He thought that my injury had meaning, had a purpose. I believed that my injury was simply an accident. Maybe Juice and I are both right, because I have the opportunity now to make sense of this accident. I believe that it's what you do after a disaster that can give it meaning.

Gradually, I began to face my new life. One day in 1995, I finally went home to Bedford, Connecticut, to spend the day with my family. In the driveway, when I saw our home again, I wept. Dana held me. At the dinner table, when each of us in turn spoke a few words about what we were thankful for, Will, my young son, said: "Dad."

When the first Superman movie came

out, I gave dozens of interviews to promote it. The question I was asked most frequently was: "What is a hero?" I remember how easily I would talk about it, the glib response that I repeated so many times.

My answer was that a hero is someone who commits a courageous action without considering the consequences. A soldier who crawls out of a foxhole to drag an injured buddy back to safety, the prisoners of war who never stop trying to escape even though they know they may be executed if they're caught.

And I also meant individuals who are slightly larger than life: Houdini and Lindbergh, of course, John Wayne and John F. Kennedy, and even sports figures who have taken on mythical proportions, such as Babe Ruth or Joe DiMaggio.

Now my definition is different. I think a

hero is an ordinary individual who finds the strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles. The 15-year-old boy down the hall at Kessler who had landed on his head while wrestling with his brother, leaving him paralysed and barely able to swallow or speak. Travis Roy, paralysed during the first 30 seconds of a hockey game in his freshman year at college. Henry Steifel, paralysed from the chest down in a car accident at 17, completing his education and working on Wall Street at the age of 32, but having raised so much of what life has to offer.

These people are real heroes — and so are the families and friends who have stood by them.

From Still Me by Christopher Reeve, published tomorrow by Century at £16.99. Times readers can buy a copy for £14.99 by calling The Times Bookshop on 0990 134459.

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TOMORROW
Christopher Reeve on why he and his wife have decided not to have a second child
Why he continues to believe that one day he will walk again
And the frustrations and indignities of his daily routine

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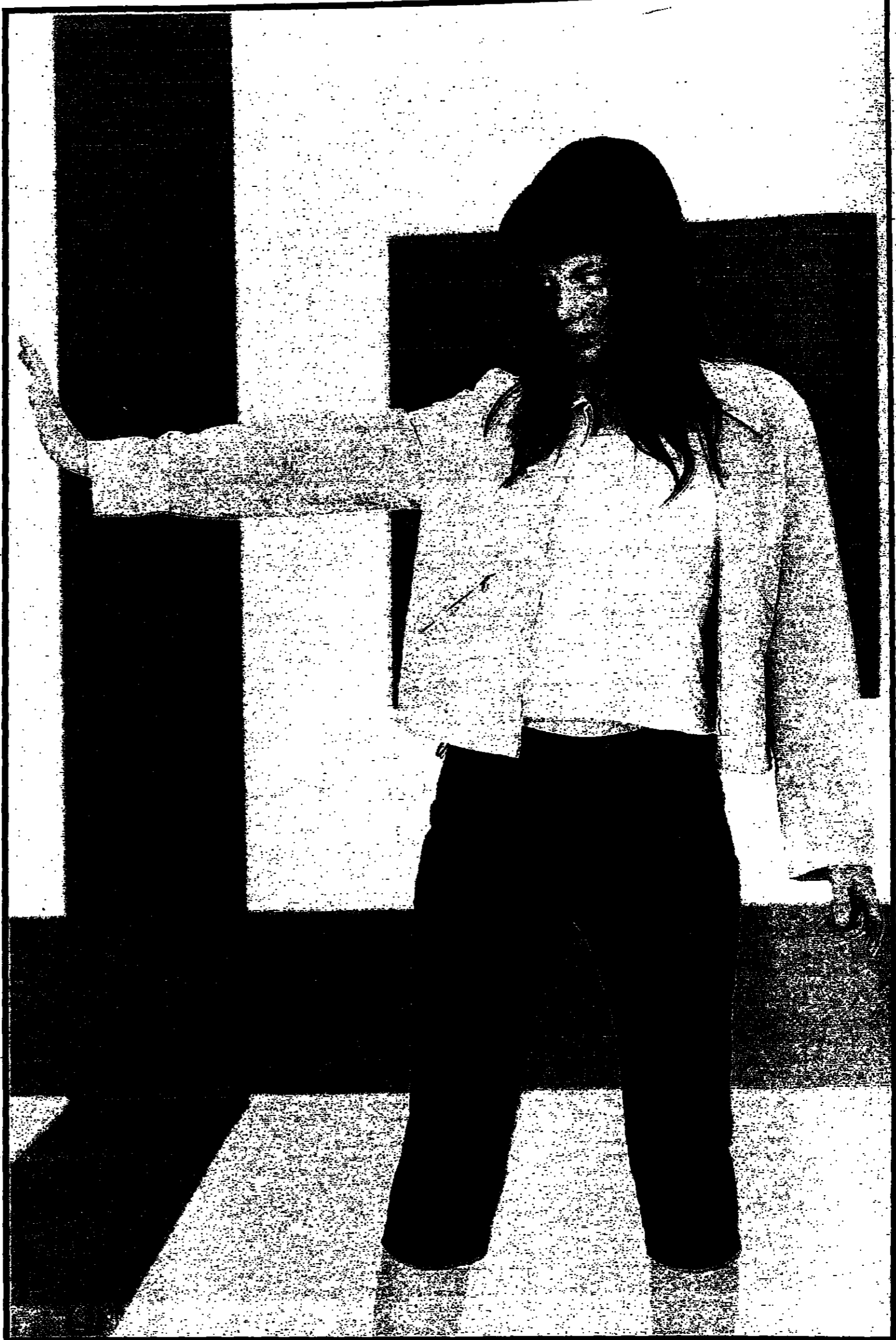
MAIN PICTURE: Stone suede Harrington jacket, £160 from Next (0345 100 500). White Lycra tank, £90 by JoelyNian available from selected branches of Whistles (0171-267 2770). Black broderie anglaise clamdiggers, £117 by Elspeth Gibson (0171-561 0773)

BOTTOM RIGHT: Black tailored zip-up stretch jacket, £125 from French Connection (0171-399 7200). Black pleat knee skirt, £110 by Whistles (0171-487 4484). Black satin kitten heels, £185 by Prada (0171-235 0008)

ABOVE: Khaki polyester zip top, £48 by APC (0171-229 4933). Beige A-line combat skirt, £58 by APC. Bitter chocolate jersey crepe shell top, £45 from Kookai (0171-837 4411)

RIGHT: White sleeveless hood top, £25, and thick Lycra fitted zip hooded top, £35, both by Warehouse (0171-278 3491). Beige lycra side slit knee skirt, £48.99 by Morgan (0171-383 2888)

Jewellery by Tataossian, mail order (0171-351 5651)



Combine that old street favourite, the zip jacket, with pleated skirts and leggings for the new utilitarian look, says Style Editor Grace Bradberry

Utilitarian is something of a buzz word at the moment. But it does not carry quite the same meaning as it did for the philosopher Jeremy Bentham, advocate of utilitarianism. In fashion, a grey skirt is utilitarian, an aqua one is not, but both will carry a "dry clean only" label. Certain black suits may be utilitarian, but ones with satin lapels are not. It is all to do with what you are "referencing" (another fashion buzz word). Hence a Mao collar is utilitarian while a shawl one is not, but both may prove just as fiddly to iron.

This season, a lot of designers are "referencing" the Harrington jacket. It was an item that held its own in playground fights, but it never looked likely to amount to much in adult life.

The sensible pleat skirt, on the other hand, was always a top-of-the-class kind of number, destined to do well in a quiet kind of way.

Now these two very different types of utilitarian — the

one streetwise and masculine, the other prim and feminine — have been wedded by, among others, the New York designer Marc Jacobs. His combination of a boxy zip jacket with a knee-length pleat skirt is one of the most influential looks of the season.

Jacobs is known for his luxury take on street and sports looks. He invented grunge, and more recently produced hooded fleece sweat tops in cashmere. This is not so much an ironic statement as an appropriation of what is practical for a high fashion market. The only irony is that these things should drift back down to the high street so quickly.

Wherever you shop, however, designer proportions have rubbed off on the new-style Harrington. A garment that once had no line, rather just a vague shape, is now bounded by a glorious geometry that gives it a whole new formality.

Jacobs's look is neat and symmetrical, with the straight

lines of the jacket giving way to the slight A-line of the pleat skirt.

Other designers have come up with other proportions. Sportmax's big and boxy linen jacket is nevertheless structured rather than baggy. Worn with a slim, diaphanous skirt, it takes on an outside charm; and teamed with loose, wide trousers it becomes casual and sporty.

Jil Sander created a lean zip jacket with a ribbed, barely-there collar that was half Chairman Mao, half old-style Harrington, then put it with slim leg pants for a lean silhouette that was a little bit sporty, but also austere and avant garde.

Byblos, Moschino, Narciso Rodriguez, Cerruti and dozens of other designers have also produced their own variations.

The most popular colours are uniform shades of navy blue, black and grey, which help to build a clean, crisp, monotone look. If the overall

effect avoids drabness, then that is because most designers have used techno fabrics — linens with a synthetic sheen, satinised cottons, acetate this, nylon that — and these new mixes have an immediate, tactile modernity.

The high street has both imitated what is on offer on the catwalk and gone off on its own tangent. The French label, APC, has long made a virtue of sturdy fabrics and utilitarian shapes, mixing street with chic in a way many designers would love to emulate. They have come up trumps again this season, with a khaki zip jacket that will sharpen the edge of any outfit.

Next's jacket is closer to the original Harrington, while that from French Connection aspires to high fashion in its cut. Warehouse has produced a younger, funkier version that has a hood and a high lycra content.

Finally, if you are wary about the acceptability of zip jackets at work, then look for one with a placket front.



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Blighted lives: about one baby in 15 is born three weeks short of full term pregnancy. Many are dogged by ill-health and become underachievers

Hope for early babies

Curtis Gallagher weighed barely two pounds when he entered the world at most four months too soon. His mother Tracey, 32, recalls: "I was preparing myself but I was shocked when I saw him. He looked more like a skinny little chicken than a baby, his head was like a little potato and his eyes were fused together. I could see through his skin. He didn't look like a baby at all."

During his four months on a ventilator, he pulled back from the brink of death countless times. He developed pneumonia and a bowel disorder, and his lungs collapsed on 12 occasions. Now aged two and a half and weighing 20 pounds, Curtis has cerebral palsy, has lost the use of his legs and is blind.

Yet his mother is glad he survived: "He is such a happy child, and he has a good quality of life. He loves his Teletubbies toys and claps when he hears football on the radio." He is also beginning to say his first words.

That Curtis pulled through, says his mother, is a tribute to Hillingdon and Great Ormond Street hospitals. However, life for Curtis is likely to remain a struggle —

Every year 40,000 British babies are born prematurely. Anjana Ahuja looks at a new campaign which could lead to more full-term births

provocative research suggests that many premature babies spend their adult lives dogged by ill-health and, more strikingly, as social and educational underachievers.

This is why research efforts into prematurity are gathering pace. The pregnancy research charity, Tommy's Campaign, is launching the £750,000 PREMETS trial, an investigation into whether an antibiotic can help to prevent very premature labour. And researchers in Newcastle, funded by Action Research, are homing in on the biology underlying prematurity nearer to term.

About one in 15 babies is born three weeks short of the full 40-week gestation period (the World Health Organisation's definition of premature). This translates to 40,000 infants a year in the UK. Of those, one in 10 will develop a permanent disability, such as lung disease, cerebral palsy or blindness.

Prematurity is more likely in multiple births, such as

twins or triplets, and if the mother suffers from heart disease or diabetes. However, in around half of all pre-term babies, the cause is a mystery.

Doctors suspect that infections of the uterus could play a crucial role in very early deliveries (before 32 weeks), and the PREMETS trial will explore this. Uterine infections accelerate the disintegration of the protective membrane in which the baby is encased. A few weeks after the onset of disintegration, the infections cause the uterus to begin contracting.

However, as the membrane falls apart, a protein called fibronectin is released. This can be detected using a deep vaginal swab: spotting it early would allow doctors to treat the infections using a drug called metronidazole.

Lucilla Poston, professor of foetal health for Tommy's Campaign, recently discovered that half of the women who tested positive for fibronectin went on to have their babies at least two months early.

Why isn't metronidazole given to pregnant women more widely? "Vaginal infections are so common that if we treated everyone, a third of pregnant women would be on it. And that's not good news," says Professor Poston. "We need to home in on the women who really need it."

She is now seeking 4,000 "high-risk" women. Volunteers may be eligible if they have had a previous pre-term delivery (before 37 weeks); have suffered a late miscarriage (16-24 weeks); had a cervical stitch during their present pregnancy; or had cervical surgery during their last pregnancy. Results are expected in two years. While infections seem to be implicated in extremely premature births (before 32 weeks), they may not be the dominant factor in deliveries closer to term. This is where researchers at the Royal Victoria

Infirmiry in Newcastle upon Tyne come in.

Dr Nicholas Europe-Finner, a molecular biologist, and Professor William Dunlop, a clinician, are investigating a protein, *G alpha s*, that tells the womb to relax. The more relaxed the womb, the less likely it is to start contracting, leading to a premature birth.

"When we tested pre-term women having contractions, we found the levels of that protein were low, which is why they were going into labour too early," Dr Europe-Finner says. The protein exists in four incarnations, or isoforms, that are almost imperceptibly different from each other. However, only two isoforms show up during pregnancy, and only in the uterus, showing that some very delicate chemistry is going on.

The Newcastle study, funded by a £112,000 grant from Action Research, aims to find out how the production of those crucial chemicals is controlled in cells.

Success will hopefully lead to drugs that can be tailored specifically for the uterus.

"When women go into pre-term labour, they are given an infusion of a hormone that turns on the protein, and relaxes the uterus," says Dr Europe-Finner. "But these drugs are non-specific — as well as relaxing the uterus, they affect other muscles, such as the heart. They must be used with great care because they affect the mother and baby, and one can end up in terrible trouble."

Both Professor Poston and Dr Europe-Finner have the physical and emotional well-being of mother and baby uppermost in their minds. However, both also acknowledge there is an economic issue — treatment for very premature newborns costs £42,000 for the first two weeks, with no guarantee that the infant will pull through. Very premature infants, Dr

Linked computers Genes Boomerang effect

Epic by numbers

A TEAM led by British Telecom recently pulled off a remarkable code-breaking feat when it linked 1,288 computers in 16 countries to break the world's most complex data-encryption code. It took 53 days and involved performing the same calculation more than 200 million million times, the equivalent of every person on earth doing 40,000 calculations.

The feat showed two things: that modern codes are genuinely difficult to crack, and that even ordinary computers when linked together in a network, make formidable number-crunchers. The same idea has been exploited by teams at several laboratories in America, where odds and ends of computer hardware networks have been combined to come close to the performance of supercomputers at a fraction of the cost.

These devices are called the Beowulf class, after the English epic in which Beowulf tackles one giant foe after another. The foes the Beowulf computers face are supercomputers — gleaming, state-of-the-art, million-dollar jobs.

The idea, *American Scientist* says, came from Thomas Sterling of Nasa's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. A few years ago he thought that a so-called gigaflop computer — one capable of a billion floating-point operations per second — could be built for \$50,000 (£31,000), using off-the-shelf components. By the autumn of 1996, two such Beowulf computers had been built, each using 16 Pentium Pro chips, one constructed by JPL and Caltech, the other by the Los Alamos



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

National Laboratory, and each for \$50,000. Even better, the two were linked up and reached more than two gigaflops.

Supercomputers are better, but then so they should be: the Beowulf devices are simply chips, or old PCs, latched together. They are the computing equivalent of the string-and-sealing-wax of the traditional physics laboratory. And in a world full of computer chips being flung out simply because a marginally faster one has been made, they provide a cheap route to powerful computing.

In one test, a Beowulf made of 88 Pentium Pros at Caltech actually beat a supercomputer. The test involved a task called photorealistic rendering, in which the computer is asked to simulate how light from a single source would be scattered and reflected around tables and chairs in a room. In this trial, the Caltech Beowulf beat an IBM SP2 costing 20 times as much.

"There is clearly going to be an explosive growth of Beowulf class computing across the country and around the world," Dr Sterling says. "It is happening now. The reasons are many, but accessibility and low cost are two of the drivers."

However, Dr Michael Warren of Los Alamos says: "We have no particular desire to build and maintain our own computer hardware. If we could buy a better system for the money, we would be using it instead." For the moment, the Beowulf route offers supercomputing on the cheap, for those clever enough to do it.

Caste system is in the blood

INDIA'S caste system has left indelible marks on the genes of modern Hindus, according to a group of Indian and American researchers. The team told a meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropology that they collected blood samples from 300 unrelated Indian men of all ranks in the hierarchy. Then they compared genes from the Y chromosome, which traces paternal ancestry, and from the mitochondria, which is inherited only through the maternal line.

The results reveal that the rules of caste were far more rigidly enforced for men than for women. While it was always possible for a woman to advance by marrying a man in a higher caste, this was not possible for men. As a result, the mitochondrial DNA shows slight blurring of the caste lines, while the Y chromosome DNA segregates clearly into different castes.

The team also found that higher castes resemble Caucasians more than they do Asians. This fits the historical belief that the caste system was imposed by Caucasians who swept into India from the northwest.

When gossiping comes back to you

PEOPLE who gossip risk becoming the victims of a boomerang effect, American psychologists have found. When we make disparaging remarks about a third party, listeners will often think less of us. "Politicians who allege corruption by their opponents may themselves be perceived as dishonest, and gossips who describe others' infidelities may themselves be viewed as immoral," the psychologists say in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

Volunteers were shown photographs of people accompanied by brief statements. Some of these were designed to provoke positive or negative responses — as an example: "He hates animals. Today he was walking to the shops and he saw this puppy. So he kicked it out of the way." Whether or not the statements were attributed to the people in the photographs, the volunteers attached the elicited trait to them.

"When you gossip, you become associated with the traits you describe, ultimately leading to those traits being transferred to you," says Dr John Skowronski of Ohio State University.

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Look at the English from another Angle

Is there anything any more of which a consensus would say, with pride, "That's very English"? As far as Hollywood is concerned, the Englishman (I'll stick to man for the purpose of this piece) who used to be a gentleman, a fine soldier, a good egg, even a bright cove is now the convenient hate figure, bordering on the fascist, someone to be suspected or sneered at.

In continental Europe, the immediate postwar Englishman largely defined by plucky war films and Ealing comedies has become a rather bewildering composite of football hooligan and diplomatic ditherer. Even in our own islands, the Englishman gets a bad press. He is the foul fiend of Braveheart's pure and honourable liberator (no mention is made of the devastation delivered by William Wallace at Lanercost Abbey and other places in the north of England). In Wales the Englishman has long been seen as the occupier, despite the Tudors. In Ireland the Englishman is, alas,

still too often seen as the invader or the impediment.

It is as the imperialist that the Englishman is most fingered. Australians, West Indians, Africans, Indians — all love to give a good kick now and then even today to the English Imperialist. And, despite their own involvement in imperialism, the Scots, the Welsh and the Irish all feel free of their colonialist past and leave the burden solely with the English.

This is a smart move all round — for the Americans because it disguises their current imperialism and for everyone else because they can play Pontius Pilate.

It is an odd business, the English question, and I think it will not go away for many years. St George's Day always brings it up, but for me A.S. Byatt's recent *Oxford Book of English Stories* brings it more firmly into focus. In

her introduction she attempts to draw a map of Englishness from stories written over the past 150 years. The British Council also comes into the argument. In a new book called *Studying British Culture* there are 55 references to Scottishness, 20 to Caribbean cultures, 27 to Welsh, 28 to the Irish and a rather meagre three to the English, none of which is complimentary.

Either the British Council is behaving in a bizarre manner, or it is suffering a comical bout of political correctness, or it is reflecting a bafflement and prefers to sweep the whole issue under the carpet.

It's the same in America. In the country people positively ache to tell you that they are Irish-American or Scottish-American or Polish or Jewish or Spanish or Greek-American, but who meets



people these days who bound up to say they are English-American? English men and women, for better and for worse, were in at the start of America, and their names and ideas and achievements shoot

through the union. But except in clustered little circles of discreet old families, the English are invisible.

Perhaps our future is to be the country against which all others define themselves, as essential and apparently modest as the zero among numbers. One problem might be that many people in England see no problem at all. Who cares about a national definition? That's for others to bother with. This can be interpreted as arrogance, as quiet confidence or as a sort of hopeless acquiescence in the world's view that we are a stale imperial leftover. I believe the second of these interpretations, although the first is still around and the third — the gloom view — can be seen in the opposition to Tony Blair's upbeat message about the country's future.

It is partly a game, this search

for Englishness. In Byatt's introductory essay there are definitions of Englishness which, as I am sure she knows, could be turned on their head with the same effect, or applied to other nations without a blink.

But the fact that many people are looking for definitions and that Englishness can seem an endangered national species could also be indicative of a profound regrouping. After a century of colossal gain, change and loss, which part of our past will be built on? The Warrior? The Intellectual? The Entrepreneur? The Inventor? A combination of all, obviously, but in what proportions — and what will be the stamp of the new Englishness?

We are about to enter the cartoon season of national characteristics with the World Cup.

Much fun will be had with stereotyping which will hover between abuse and the competitive high spirits endemic in all football rivalries. England's supporters will be the projectors of England's image over the world for a few weeks and, provided the lunatic fringe does not get drunk, victimised and consequently aggressive — and provided our own press does not turn on our own people — this image need not be at all bad.

My own direct experience of English supporters at the 20 or more football matches a year I have been to over the past ten years is of a witty, tolerant, passionate, unexpected, reserved lot, individual to a degree — and much like the character of the three stories in Byatt's collection which got nearest to my sort of Englishness: those by Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Hardy and P.G. Wodehouse.

Now if we had those three in the England midfield for France — Agincourt, eat your heart out.

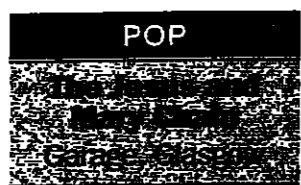
The bad boys are back in town

BACK IN 1984, the Jesus and Mary Chain seemed like apocalyptic young assassins come to finish off the hatchet job on rock which the Sex Pistols never quite completed. Their weapons were howling feedback, fearsome arrogance and an arsenal of two-minute paeans to drugs, sex and teenage suicide. These black-clad Glaswegians were like Warholian pop art in human form, but their ground-breaking sound was soon overshadowed by a reputation for playing 20-minute sets and inciting riots.

Ultimately, though, the band's core fraternal duo of Jim and William Reid were far too infatuated with rock history to truly trash it. For all their nihilistic posturing, the brothers came to praise pop music, not bury it. Instead of subverting the music business they settled for a cosy niche on its cult fringes, recording a series of modestly successful albums which dabbled in country, hip-hop and goth rock.

But the band's new album, *Munki*, is their rawest for more than a decade — and last Thursday's Glasgow homecoming exploited this newly rediscovered roughness to the full. Guitars blasted out at thunderous volume, topped off with squalling white noise and bludgeoning drums.

Lead guitarist William grinned psychotically during his two vocal cameos, the sleazy rumble of *Cracking Up*



and the profane, self-lacerating *I Hate Rock and Roll*. But as usual it was frontman Jim's catatonic detachment and passive-aggressive lack of expression which commanded the most attention. His carapace of cool was only broken when he counterbalanced his older brother's cynical sneers with a heartfelt serenade entitled *I Love Rock and Roll*.

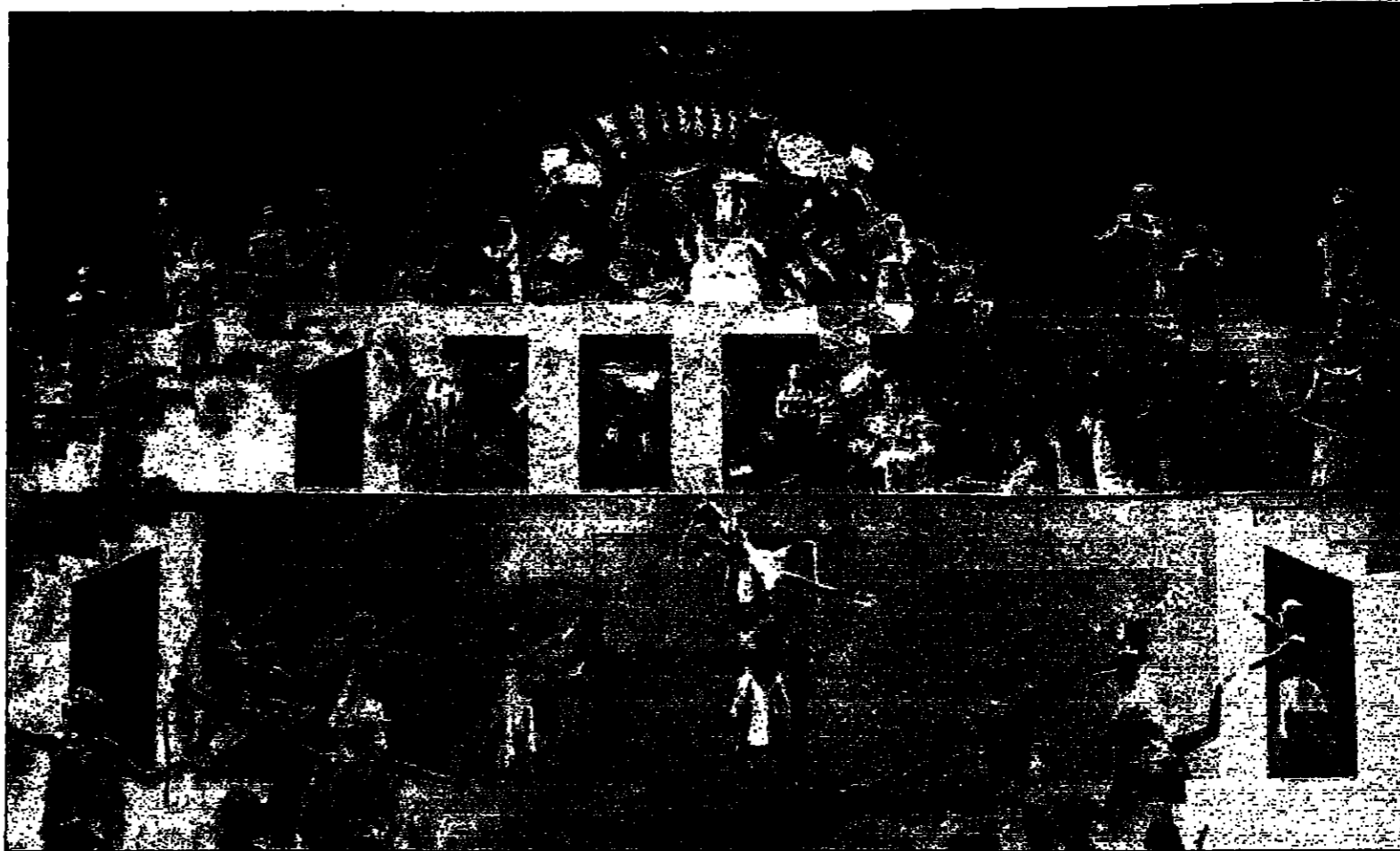
At their best, the Jesus and Mary Chain combine Springsteen-esque anthemic simplicity with the dirty thrill of classic gutter rock. In Glasgow, *Happy When It Rains* and *Dream Lover* both proved to be prime examples of this demonic bubblegum formula, despite having been written a decade apart. At their worst, the Reids still occasionally lapse into rock'n'roll cliché and mistake muddiness for heroic self-destruction. Such was the case with the climactic demolition of *Reverence*, which was played at half speed and soon degenerated into a formless racket. For a band whose sonic vandalism once represented passionate defiance, this anticlimax smacked of lazy self-parody.

STEPHEN DALTON

Public goes ape for Joe Green

Arena opera is not exactly new — they have been doing it at Verona for the best part of a century — but it is very much the thing, certainly after the recent success of *Madam Butterfly* at the Albert Hall. But Earls Court, where Harvey Goldsmith mounted Giuseppe Raffia's production of *Aida* for a three-performance run, made the Albert Hall look like a studio theatre.

This was big stuff, with a cast of hundreds performing to heaven knows how many thousand spectators. Antonio Mastromattei's tiered set offered four acting areas on four



Arena Verdi: some of the cast of hundreds who created a high-tech *Aida* for an appreciative audience of thousands at Earls Court on the weekend

separate levels, connected by moving stairways that could be covered for more intimate scenes.

The decor came by way of elaborate, constantly shifting projections which could be "wiped" cinematically. Brightly coloured, they varied from crisply defined hieroglyphics to pyramids, to architectural motifs, to garish splodges that may or may not have metamorphosed into Egyptian artefacts.

There was not much in the way of production other than "stand and sing", nor need there have been, in the circumstances. The army of extras was efficiently marshalled; only the reach-me-down choreography was disappointing.

Placing the orchestra under one of the levels minimised problems of communication, but of course there had to be amplification, and it was better managed than often in the past. On the first night it favoured the voices at the expense of the players at first, but someone twiddled the knobs halfway through — not altogether to the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra's

advantage. The excellent Philharmonic chorus, too, was over-miked.

At least it did not unduly distort some fine voices. Wilhelmina Fernandez, on top form, was the glamorous

and sweet-toned *Aida*, secure right up to a genuine pianissimo top C in the Nile aria. The world is not exactly crawling with tenors who can sing Radames, which should make one all the more grateful for

Dennis O'Neill's secure, warily moulded tone and for his sensitive, soft singing.

There was an exciting newcomer as Amneris, the Polish mezzo Malgorzata Walewska, easy at the top of the range and

richly coloured at the bottom. Walter Donati, most unfortunately costumed as a pantomime dame, was the forthright Amonasro.

Any problems? The absence of surtitles must have worried

some people, but not me — it was good to sit in an audience listening to the performance rather than reading it. And I wish there had been a conductor more responsive than Raffia to the dramatic rhythms of Verdi's music, one with a less developed taste for extremes of tempo.

Not an evening for purists, maybe, but no serious damage was done to Verdi, and the audience enjoyed itself hugely.

RODNEY MILNES
This review appeared in late editions of The Times on Friday

EN

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Symphonic sigh

nights for his Fourth Symphony. And I suspect he would have been intrigued by the sharply contrasting responses to his music.

Where Mikhail Pletnev with the Philharmonic turned to the beating of the music's heart. The dying fall of the little two-note phrase ending in the woodwind, which gives the cue for the opening material, was definitely a sigh here, not just a cunningly turned

and ardently, giving time and space for meditation and variation.

This Fourth Symphony was preceded by Bartók's suite.

HILARY FINCH

The Miraculous Mandarin

in a performance which thrillingly revealed Gatti's particular skill in propelling meticulously prepared detail with a whiplash of spontaneous energy.

RODNEY MILNES

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musical motif. And when the wind soloists enter with their little slippery, halting figures, the sense of desolation in their voices was emphasised in the way Gatti recessed the strings' waltz as if it were being heard behind gauze. Each time this happened, there was a real drawing-in of breath, a moment of illusory stillness within the inexorable momentum of the movement.

Where Pletnev preferred to emphasise the virtuosity of Tchaikovsky's writing and of his players in a daringly fast third movement, Gatti took time to draw out the almost Mahlerian levels of recession in its passing images. This was truly rustic peasant roistering.

Gatti may not have shown Pletnev's native instinct for the exquisitely idiomatic inflection of the second movement's song. But the oboe and cellos of the RPO sang simply

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There are rules on the Anglo-American actor trade. Guess who's flouting them? Mark Shenton reports

Stars and gripes for hire (or rent)

Every way you turn right now in London's theatreland you bump into American actors. From the big musicals *Show Boat*, *Rent* and *Whistle Down the Wind* to the Almeida's production of *The Iceman Cometh*, a *Question of Mercy* at the Bush and the National's *Not About Nightingales*, Americans either comprise the entire cast or play starring roles. And coming soon are the Barbican Centre's short seasons by Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company and New York's Acting Company, as part of its current year-long celebration of American culture.

Travelling the other way, New York has just welcomed Theatre de Complicite's production of *The Chairs*; Martin McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* is currently to be found on Broadway in its original Royal Court/Druid Theatre production; and the Almeida production of David Hare's *The Judas Kiss* is transferring there this week.

Since London and New York are the undisputed centres of the English-speaking theatrical world, it is only natural that these exchanges should take place. However, with the respective British and American Equity unions keen to protect the interests and jobs of their own members, they are not always easily achieved. A complicated set of rules is in place — and it is widely acknowledged that it is much more stringently applied by the American side than by their British counterparts.

Despite what Peter Finch, British Equity's assistant general secretary, calls "an historic meeting" last year between representatives of the two unions and the respective agencies representing theatre producers in Britain and the United States, no resolution was reached. "We left it recording our differences and resolving to work to overcome them," Finch says.

Rupert Rhymes, the chief executive of the Society of London Theatre, says: "It's very difficult for us always to understand American Equity's position, which seems to change from moment to moment."

The most common way for an actor to work in another country is via the exchange system, which has been in place since 1985. Bona fide international stars — who are regarded as performing unique services wherever they appear — are exempt from this, but otherwise a producer seeking to export a British actor to America must undertake to import an American actor to Britain, and vice versa. "This scheme," says Finch, "has by and large been successful in achieving its aims, which were to facilitate the engagement of actors who are perhaps not considered to be 'stars' in the other country."

But the American side regularly puts up obstacles. They have frequently disputed the international status of some



JOAN MARCUS



DONALD COOPER

Fair exchange? *Rent* (left) can bring original cast members to the West End, and Liam Neeson can take *The Judas Kiss* to Broadway, but Michael Gambon had to prove he was a star

actors proposed. "Whereas British Equity will often acknowledge a Broadway star, such as Stockard Channing, a West End star isn't always acknowledged on Broadway — they've got to have done film first," says Peter Wilkins, the producer for Duncan C. Weldon, a manager with a regular presence on both sides of the Atlantic. For the Broadway transfer of David Hare's *Skyline* last year, producer Robert Fox had to persuade American Equity of Michael Gambon's star status; they eventually agreed it, but he was forced to promise an exchange to secure the appearance of co-star Lia Williams in the play there.

will adhere to the agreement made," comments Finch. Entire productions can achieve a transfer if they can be defined as comprising a "unit company". As such they are permitted to play for a specified limited season in the other country, without the usual necessity to provide a trade-off exchange. Thus it is that 57 North American cast-members of *Show Boat* have set up residence at the Prince Edward, in the same way that last year another all-American company, led by Jerry Lewis,

presented *Damn Yankees* for a summer season at the Adelphi. But when Complicite's production of *The Chairs*, now on Broadway with Richard Briers and Geraldine McEwan reprising their Royal Court performances, sought similar company status, it was rejected, and the company's Broadway presenter Bill Kenwright has had to agree an exchange instead.

"We have a different position on the status of unit companies," agrees Finch. "American Equity requires

of the several companies that have played in the show throughout North America and Canada.

"We take the pragmatic view that unless the producer brought this cast, it would not happen at all here," says Finch. "But what we get out of it is that after six months they are required to recast it locally, and so provide work for our members."

Even when entire companies are allowed to travel, economic problems often arise. The Bush in West

London, which recently sent its production of Joe Penhall's *Love and Understanding* to New Haven's Long Wharf Theatre, is currently hosting a visit by an all-American company in a new play by David Rabe, *A Question of Mercy*. "We are paying them the standard Equity rate," says Deborah Aydon, the Bush's general manager, "but American Equity demanded higher 'per diem' expenses payments than we usually pay, to facilitate the exchange. We've had to raise separate funding to make it possible."

Actress Carole Shelley, British born but resident for the past 34 years in America, is returning to London professionally for only the second time in her career, to star in *Show Boat*. "It's a difficult problem to solve, because salaries are very different here from those over there. If a play does well in New York, perhaps the actors should be given the option to take a pay cut to come here and do it — audiences like to see the creators of the original success."

London theatregoers are getting that chance with *Rent*, several of whose cast have been with the show since its earliest workshop versions in New York. One of them, Anthony Rapp, says: "I'm curious to see how well'll be received here. It's very exciting but also scary — I don't know how British audiences and critics will respond. I guess we're about to find out."

Too much of a terrific thing

AS THE woman said as she pulled the hat down over her son's third eye: Oh! you can cover it up, but you can never quite forget it," drools *Shockheaded Peter*'s moribund narrator. It is a fitting epitaph both for the book *Strawwelpeper* and for this staging of it, sponsored by Barclays Stage Partners. Heinrich Hoffmann's collection of children's verse was one of quite the nastiest works to emerge from the 19th-century instructive month's generations of children have grown up with a morbid terror of thumb-snipping tailors. Hoffmann's poems have been set to music by the Tiger Lillies, a sinister vaudeville ensemble led by the epicure Martyn Jacques. Around these set pieces has been woven a moral narra-

heart-stopping perfection is a curious heavy-handedness with the text: too much is happening on a narrative level. Bleach's mesmerising narrator is simultaneously involved in all manner of running jokes: he is the frustrated classical actor who hobbles on to do *Richard III*, he is the unconscious conduit for dodgy puns, he is the shabby travelling player who makes amateurish mistakes.

In a show already so rich with magic and invention, this excess becomes its downfall: the atmosphere on set occasionally resembles warring factions jostling for control over the space. But *Shockheaded Peter* remains a potent reminder of the power of live theatre.

What holds it back from

Design and direction team Phelim McDermott and Julian Crouch have deployed every possible theatrical trick available without resorting to modern special effects. The toy theatre stage spews out puppets and trapdoors, paper flames crackle through the floorboards, snow falls, swallows on sticks play in the air, each surface flips open to reveal another. On every visual level, *Shockheaded Peter* is simply gorgeous.

HETTIE JUDAH

This week in THE TIMES



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REVIEW: Wednesday



THEATRE
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Just the job, or the worst of all worlds?

David Conway on the obsession with sex equality in the workplace

At first glance, the notion that women should enjoy exactly the same employment opportunities as men seems wholly reasonable. But political goals that appear benign at first sight can acquire a different hue upon closer examination. Such is the case with equal opportunities, and the lives of practically everyone will improve no end when those obsessed with it no longer have their grip on us.

Equal opportunities was originally intended simply to remove all legal and other barriers — notably, sexual and racial prejudice — that prevented suitably qualified people from being eligible for a job. Careers were to be open to anyone with the required talent. This commendable objective has now largely been achieved — but it is an achievement that never required laws against racial and sexual discrimination in the workplace.

Competition imposes such stiff financial penalties upon firms which hire or promote on any grounds other than merit that equal opportunities might safely have been left to market forces alone.

Since the 1960s equal opportunities has acquired a different and more sinister meaning, and the Equal Opportunities Commission is its most vociferous champion. Here, opportunities are said to be equal only when the two sexes have an equal share of the best jobs, and when women are less well represented, they

sees is simply a result of supply and demand. It is not, as the Equal Opportunities Commission would have us believe, the residue of some supposed historic under-valuation of women's traditional occupations — a fact borne out by the not ungenerous remuneration paid to super-models.

Any attempt to equalise the numbers of men and women in all spheres of employment cannot succeed without severely damaging their largely shared preference for continuing the time-honoured tradition of dividing their joint labour between paid employment and childcare.

Any feasible alternative requires extensive publicly funded or subsidised childcare. Ultimately, the cost would fall on the taxpayer and it would be increasingly difficult for couples to get by on the paid income of only one partner, typically the father. More mothers would be forced into full or part-time jobs, even though they would rather stay at home with their children. This is hardly an extension of women's opportunities.

Not all women are capable of the high-flying jobs so beloved by the feminist intelligentsia, any more than are all men. For large numbers of women, perhaps most, being a full-time mother to pre-school children is the most worthwhile, fulfilling and dignified role they can ever assume. It is a role incompatible with equal representation in the labour market, and so has

Laws were never needed; no firm can ignore the best person for the job

been sacrificed to the obsession with equal opportunities. A legal requirement of equal pay for work of equal value reduces rather than extends women's employment opportunities. In so far as it is the setting of wage rates above what employers would spontaneously have been prepared to pay, it simply reduces the numbers of jobs on offer. Likewise, affirmative action fosters the impression that women cannot succeed on merit alone, breeds resentment among men who, rightly or wrongly, feel victimised by it, and is hugely costly to administer.

The unregulated free market gives women much greater opportunity than ever the Equal Opportunities Commission can provide, not least that of staying at home to look after their young children. It is the free market, rather than the commission, to whom women should look to extend their opportunities.

Rather than a new law to extend and strengthen its powers, which the commission is demanding, it is now surely time to rescind the legislation and wind up the commission, whatever useful propagandistic purposes it might initially have served, having long ago been accomplished. Bluntly put: "Time, ladies, please!"

David Conway is Professor of Philosophy at Middlesex University. His pamphlet *Free-Market Feminism is published by the Institute of Economic Affairs today.*

Women tend to concentrate in this sector, with the result that there is a relative oversupply of labour and pay rates are pushed down. The so-called pay gap between

charges made before the election had turned out to be untrue — that the Government would revert to old Labour, would get bogged down in devolution, would not be able to control the party and would be the same as the Tories.

Disappointment has mainly come from either those who did not understand what new Labour was about, like some in the arts and pop music worlds, or from those who never agreed with him in the first place on the old Labour Left.

Yet the desire always to remain popular has a price in a lack of clear identity. The Government risks appearing to be all things to all people. Mr Blair is unashamedly non-ideological: his creed is "what counts is what works". But his main theme of "modernisation" is a slogan, not a policy. Ministers too often indulge in

and inconsistencies, but we are moving towards a more federal, and written, constitution. Gordon Brown's early decision to make the Bank of England responsible for setting interest rates was also, by any standards, bold. Jack Straw has already set a new agenda on disorder and youth justice, while David Blunkett has pressed ahead with action to raise school standards.

Yet in its desire not to risk making enemies, the Government has so far been reluctant to take the "hard choices" that it so often proclaims. Mr Brown has conveyed an image of fiscal rectitude, but he has been a major beneficiary of the tight spending plans he inherited and a strong economy. And although he has raised taxes, this has been indirectly, from privatised utilities and pension funds, in ways intended to minimise

empty populist language, typified by the use of People's as a ubiquitous prefix. David Selbourne tellingly argues in a Centre for Policy Studies pamphlet today that this sub-Orwellian rhetoric reveals a lack of intellectual coherence. The current enthusiasm for the Third Way — somewhat improbably, if vacuously endorsed by Robin Cook — shows a government in search of a unifying principle after, rather than before, it wins office.

Perversely, this glib rhetoric has done Mr Blair a disservice by masking rather than highlighting the Government's record. More has been done than many of us expected a year ago, particularly on constitutional reform. There are many loose ends

Revulsion from the crimes of Sidney Cooke is no excuse for this ugly display of mob violence

Hype, hysteria and the culture of fear

I remember riding through Knowle, quite early in the morning, one day in the winter of 1940. I was sitting in the sidecar of a motorcycle which belonged to one of the housemasters at Clifton Preparatory School. As we rode through the centre of Bristol, it was still burning; there was a confusion of hoses and fire engines. There was another bad fire in the church before the top of Knowle Hill, where an incendiary bomb had lodged in the spire. There was glass in the streets, and many of the windows had been blown out. Rather few people were around, some of them sweeping up the glass.

The night before had seen the second blitz on Bristol. We had heard one dangerous moment in our shelter, built no more sturdily than a public lavatory, which was at one end of the rigger field. The German bombs were being dropped in sticks of four or five. We could hear such a stick coming towards us as it exploded and then the bomb landed in the playing fields; the fourth landed at about the 45-yard line of our pitch. We waited to discover whether a fifth bomb was going to land on top of us. There was a rattle of stones from the nearest blast on the roof of the shelter, and then silence.

In 1940 the West Country was under deadly assault. The centre of Bristol was destroyed that night, and something like one or two thousand people may have been killed, though the casualty list was an official secret. There was nothing much to defend these West Country cities and towns, which were so close to the German airfields in northern France, Plymouth, and later Bath and Exeter, also suffered heavy attacks.

Many people had the further anxiety that members of their family were on military service, or working on ships in the Atlantic convoys. Yet there was no sense of panic, no

hysteria. The idea of 350 people demonstrating outside a police station in Knowle West, throwing bricks, bottles and petrol bombs, and setting cars alight, would have seemed grotesque. So would the crowd of Yeovil citizens who were shouting at Paddy Ashdown last Saturday as though he were a second Herod, personally ordering the massacre of the innocent. The West Country people of 1940 would have been amazed at the reactions of 1998, and deeply shocked.

It is extraordinary to see this part of England, where I have lived all my life, so hysterical and full of fear. When I ask people why it is happening, and why now, they reply, "children", as though any threat to the safety of children is an automatic justification for crowd hysteria. Yet much larger numbers of children were at much greater risk in 1940.

My parents lived about ten miles from Bristol; they heard the German bombers go over, and saw the city burning, red in the blackout of the northern sky. I was still a child; they knew I might have been killed, and indeed I nearly was. They did not respond by picketing the local police station or telephoning their Member of Parliament. They spent the following morning helping to organise local accommodation for people who had been bombed out of Bristol.

Of course, paedophilia, particularly when it is sadistic, is a horrible crime. It touches on three basic

human instincts, care for children, sex and the fear of death. What Sidney Cooke did was at the extreme of evil; he was part of a sex orgy in which a runaway teenager was killed, and was sentenced to 16 years in prison for his crime. In Belgium, the case of Marc Dutroux was equally evil, and involved police incompetence to an extraordinary degree. The Belgian public believe there has been a cover-up, and that there are paedophiles in public positions where they can protect

ford's view that Myra Hindley can now be treated as an ordinary prisoner who has served more than her normal sentence. Nor do I think that Sidney Cooke can ever return, as most ex-convicts eventually do, to something like ordinary life. These are crimes which will not be forgiven by the justice of this world. They include genocide and the murder of children for sport.

Yet this ultimate revulsion from the crime is no justification for public hysteria. In the first place, there is now virtually nothing to fear from Sidney Cooke himself. He is in police custody, and is willing to remain there. He may still be potentially dangerous, in the sense that he still has sadistic fantasies about young people; we do not know whether that is so. He is, at worst, a most remote danger, like a potentially lethal germ being kept under secure conditions in a laboratory. In human life there must always be countless nominal dangers of this kind, fears which keep people awake on winter nights.

Real dangers do arise from the hysteria itself. Forty six policemen were injured in the riot outside the Knowle West police station. I doubt whether more than 46 Bristol policemen were injured on any one night of the Blitz. Sidney Cooke was not even in the Knowle police station at the time. This hysteria has not been

confined to the case of Cooke or to the West Country. The Association of Chief Probation Officers last week issued a report which shows the public disturbances have occurred in 40 places and that they have seriously interfered with the police surveillance of sex offenders.

In one typical case, the press was also involved. A tabloid newspaper, "outed" the dangerous sex offender, who was under police supervision. Not surprisingly, he disappeared. The police caught up with him again when he started applying for jobs as a babysitter. The demonstrations, let alone the violence, make it far more difficult for the police to protect the public. To some extent, the mothers who had demonstrated against the police are actually putting their children at risk, because they interfere with police arrangements to protect children in general.

Human society has many horrors to deal with, including Aids, cancer, nuclear pollution, wars, genocide, all types of accidents, diseases and crimes. The greater the threat, the more a sound society will protect itself by the traditional virtues of courage and calmness in the face of danger, and by supporting the doctors, scientists, soldiers, police and even politicians in the front line of defence.

We seemed now to have developed a less resilient and much less rational society than the Britain of 60 years ago. It is not only a matter of dumbing-down, though it is absurd to throw a petrol bomb at a policeman to demonstrate one's disapproval of paedophilia. It is also a matter of hyping-up, of turning every anxiety into a demo. Even in the West Country, which used to be known for its solidity of temperament, we seem to be becoming both a dumbed-down and a hyped-up society. It makes an ugly combination.

William Rees-Mogg

Dutroux. After his temporary escape, two ministers have had to resign as an apology of the incompetence of his guards.

Naturally, people want the British Government to introduce new legislation to protect the public against known paedophiles and other recurrent sex offenders. To a large extent that is already being done, and further legislation is being prepared. It is also natural that the sadistic murder of children should be an offence which the public is not prepared to forgive.

I have never shared Lord Long-

It's time to lay down the law

Tony Blair's commandments have still to be spelt out, says Peter Riddell

Tony Blair is often compared with Margaret Thatcher, to their mutual irritation and amusement. However, their leadership styles are crucially different — which explains why Mr Blair is now in such a strong position on his first anniversary in office and why there are still so many uncertainties about where the Government is heading.

Mr Blair dominates the political scene in a way that Mrs Thatcher only briefly did in the mid-1980s. He is both presidential in style and overshadows close Cabinet colleagues. His popularity has been consciously protected and nurtured, rather than risked. He has become the voice of One Nation, often being publicly shown as above the partisan battle, in non-political settings. But this is not a merely presentational device. As David Marquand writes in *Prospect*, whereas "Margaret Thatcher was a warrior, Tony Blair is a healer". At its best, notably after the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, he can express the national mood. This authority enabled him to play a key role in concluding the Northern Ireland talks and has landed him in the unexpected, and unsought, role of host to the Middle East peace talks a week today.

His priority has understandably been to establish Labour as a governing party again after so long in opposition. Despite some glitches and more poor ministers than Downing Street likes to pretend, the first year has gone pretty smoothly. Last Thursday, Mr Blair gave a pep-talk to the Cabinet on the anniversary, which he said was "not a time for congratulation or celebration" (a sure sign that it is). He argued, fairly, that



RIDDLELL ON MONDAY

empty populist language, typified by the use of People's as a ubiquitous prefix. David Selbourne tellingly argues in a Centre for Policy Studies pamphlet today that this sub-Orwellian rhetoric reveals a lack of intellectual coherence. The current enthusiasm for the Third Way — somewhat improbably, if vacuously endorsed by Robin Cook — shows a government in search of a unifying principle after, rather than before, it wins office.

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public complaints. The Chancellor failed last year to increase taxes on consumers, which might have eased the interest rate dilemma and pressure on sterling. Mr Brown has been able to see off critics and raise spending on health and education only by transferring an unexpected, and probably exceptional, underspend from last year to this year.

However, "hard choices" cannot be deferred for ever. As Mr Blair told the Cabinet, this summer's key event will be the comprehensive spending review, inevitably dubbed "money for modernisation". But ministers no longer talk about securing big savings from social security to finance schools and the NHS. For all the hype about the welfare debate, last month's Green Paper was longer on analysis than specific proposals.

The main dodged "hard choice" has been Europe. Mr Blair has sought both to retain the support of sceptic papers, notably *The Sun*, and to claim a leading role in Europe (privately assuring other leaders that Britain wants to enter EMU after the next election). This messy balancing act is not sustainable for long. If Britain is to be ready to join in four or five years, with the necessary "yes" vote in a referendum, then the Government has to start committing itself and preparing now.

Mr Thatcher established her authority, and defined Thatcherism, by the March 1981 Budget and a reshuffle two years after being elected. Similarly, now, Mr Blair must start to take tough and potentially unpopular decisions (at least with traditional Labour supporters) — on public spending, Europe, trade unions, and, possibly, electoral reform at Westminster.

While like Mrs Thatcher before 1981, the Blairites are now a minority in the Cabinet, he faces no political, or intellectual, challenge as she did from the "wets". But the coming reshuffle offers him the chance to strengthen the hold of Blairites throughout the Government. Mr Blair currently dominates the political landscape. But he has yet to establish firm foundations for the still indistinct edifice of Blairism.

Written off

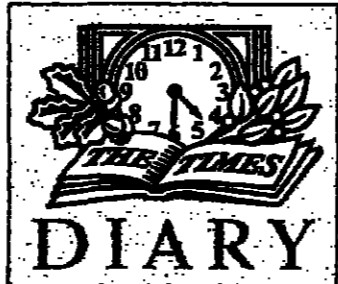
SIR JULIAN CRITCHLEY has lost his pulling power. The former Conservative MP, who has coined some of the most memorable put-downs about his own party, cannot find a publisher for his latest scribbles. Literary types are shunning the veteran wet because the views of those made redundant last May do not matter a jot in Blairite Britain. "I am writing a diary, a lamentation on the party," says Critchley, who has a long list of publications to his name. "But publishers say that my profile has dropped." William Hague will be relieved. Critchley, who described Margaret Thatcher as "the great sea-elephant", explains that his latest scribbles are a cross "between Alan Clark, James Lees-Milne and Jeffrey Archer".

"Hague is the Mike Atherton of politics. He leads the Second 11, while the two best players, Clarke and Hezza, are injured," he says. "The party appeals only to foxhunters and beef-eaters." Clark (pictured right), the Tory MP who has escaped the same deflation, believes Critchley has one or two good books in him. "I like his writing. It's a bit self-regarding but he is being needlessly self-effacing to compare himself with Archer. I have a high regard for Julian. I can't read a word of Archer." If Critchley's literary career really is over, the world of political writing has lost one of its more entertaining inhabitants.



● ROBERT CARLYLE, one of the uninhibited chaps in *The Full Monty*, has revealed the cast has not been asked to appear in the sequel planned in Hollywood. Instead, they are considering producing their own prequel, with the working title *The Half Monty*.

● BLEEPED OUT THE pitfalls of countering media stereotyping. Stephen Pound, who became Labour MP for Ealing last



year, agreed to take part in a debate about whether Tony Blair's newest colleagues were robots for Radio 4's *The Week In Westminster*. Steve Richards, the presenter, suggested Pound was a typical Blairite flunky, with little reason to exist other than to troop dutifully through the lobbies. The MP began his defence, emphasising his independence from the party machine, when his bleeper went off. "I'm sorry," he mumbled. "I'm going to have to leave. The whips have summoned me back for an emergency vote."

● NINETY magistrates have been struck down by a mystery bug after listening to an address by Lord Irvine of Lairg, the Lord Chancellor, at a law conference in Yorkshire. "We're not sure what the cause is," admits a health inspector. "It could have been caused by

just one person." Lord Irvine, I am pleased to report, was one of the few who escaped.

Paula who?

NO WONDER Kenneth Starr, the American special prosecutor, cannot pin a bean on Bill Clinton. A contemporary of the American President at Oxford in the late Sixties has disclosed that when he booked into hotels for romantic weekends, he did not use the traditional Mr and Mrs Smith, but signed as Mr and Mrs Thomas Jefferson. Peter Clarke, a journalist, also reveals in the *Erotic Review* the apprentice Lothario's preparation for dates: "There were two good restaurants in town. The Elizabeth was the scene for his rendezvous with a woman called Elizabeth, and another girlfriend was taken to the Randolph Hotel. Naturally, she was named Randy." My free tip to Starr: start searching for a Mr and Mrs Jefferson who in the early Nineties checked into any motel in Arkansas whose name sounds something like Paula.

● IN death, John Julius Norwich will be a giving man. His gold bracelet reads: "Any part of my body may be used for transplant or research. To the recipient of my

eyes, I also bequeath my spectacles." The writer and broadcaster fears the two would be useless without.

Sly dig

JUST when you thought it safe to return to the cinema, Sylvester Stallone, the Hollywood brawn who has made a career out of delivering perfectly formed grunts, disclosed to the world six months ago that he was giving up action movies. "Those kind of movies are dead and buried now," said Stallone (pictured). "I want to make films that stick in the memory a little longer." His conversion to art, however, does not seem to have lasted long: Dimension Films has



announced that it will be selling distribution rights at Cannes to Rambo IV, a \$75 million epic featuring Stallone.

● SIR BRIAN MAWHINNEY, who as chairman of the Conservative Party appeared to have banana skins tied on his shoes, has picked up a hot non-executive chairmanship. He is to oversee Andrus House, a Belfast property group, founded by Dilij Rana, whose main claim to fame is that in the early Sixties he introduced curry to the city.

Front runners

THE poisoned chalice is about to be grasped. Anne McElvoy, the delightful associate editor of *The Independent on Sunday*, and Peter Wilby, the cerebral books editor of the *New Statesman*, head the shortlist drawn up for the editorship of the left-wing mag. The vacancy arose earlier this month after Ian Hargreaves left. It is believed his initially cordial relationship with Geoffrey Robinson, its proprietor and the Paymaster General, deteriorated after the *Statesman* remained reticent about the boss's complex financial affairs. I wish McElvoy and Wilby the best of luck; they'll need it.



TANTRUMS in *Tramp*. Lysette Anthony, the actress, complains that she was duped into modelling a frock which she says Sumbul Ahmed, the designer, claimed was made for Diana, Princess of Wales. The actress, who appears in Barbara Cartland bodice-rippers, wore the dress at a charity fundraiser at *Tramp*, the nightspot. "The dress looked like a sack of potatoes," she says. Ahmed admits: "Diana never actually commissioned anything, but she did show interest in my collection when I met her in Lahore last year." I am sure Anthony looked wonderful, nonetheless.

EDWARD WELSH



COURT CIRCULAR

WINDSOR CASTLE
April 25: The Queen, Patron, this evening attended a Reception at Sandringham House to mark the Centenary of the Royal Norfolk Veterans' Association.

Royal engagements

The Duke of York, trustee, will give a dinner at Sunninghill Park in aid of the National Maritime Museum, at 7.45.

Mr Martindale Sidwell

A thanksgiving evensong for the life and work of Mr Martindale Sidwell, Organist and Director of Music of St Clement Dances 1957-1992 and founder and conductor of the London Bach Orchestra, was held on Saturday at St Clement Dances, Strand.

Birthdays today

Professor J.P. Barron, Master, St Peter's College, Oxford, 64; Sir Marshall Sir Charles Broughton, 87; Miss Dorsey Buller, ballerina, 87; Mr Donald Buttress, Surveyor of the Works of Westminster Abbey, 66; Sir Robert Cheseman, former Windsor Goldsmith College, 89; the Most Rev R.H.A. Eames (life peer), Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, 61; Mr Michael Fish, meteorologist, 54; Sir Peter Imbert, former Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, 68; the Right Rev E.W. Kemp, Bishop of Chichester, 83; Sir Harry Melville, FRS, former Principal, Queen Mary College, 90; Air Vice-Marshal J.J. Miller, 70; Mr Iqbal Othman, violinist, 67; Mr Jeff Probyn, rugby player, 42; Mr Richard Ralph, diplomat, 52; Mr Alan Reynolds, painter, 72; the Hon Nicholas Serota, Director, Tate Gallery, 67; Mr Taylor of Gryfe, 82; Sir John Thomson, diplomat, 71.

Nature notes

The later spring visitors are now arriving. Garden warblers are singing in the new foliage; they are plump, buff-coloured birds and have a more steady song than the impetuous outbursts of the blackcap, though sometimes they are very hard to distinguish by ear alone. Sedge warblers are singing their jerky song in the bushes, often imitating a nearby great tit or chaffinch; they lurk mostly out of sight but occasionally fly up into the air to sing. Some blackbirds and robins already have small young; they are very skilful at approaching the nest unobtrusively, for magpies, jays and carrion crows are watch-

ing them, hoping to find the nestlings. Most trees are a brilliant green, in rain and in sunshine. Young sycamore leaves have a pink or coppery tinge; the curly, olive-green oak leaves are among the last to appear, bursting out of the buds along with the male catkins. Small pink storkbill flowers are opening close to the ground, and the cross-shaped, pale pink flowers of lady's smock are standing tall in wet meadows. In towns, cherry blossom petals are blowing along the streets. Many peacock butterflies emerged at the weekend; they cling to a flower, tilting their wings towards the sun to absorb its warmth. DJM



Jihui Cao, 8, examining a plasma ball, one of the visual aids the project uses to make science appeal to children

Lighthouse shines bright in community awards scheme

CHILDREN as young as four are being taught the rudiments of chemistry and physics as part of a pioneering after-school project in South London.

Alexandra Frea reports on a popular after-school project for budding young scientists

Members of the Little Atoms Science Project in Southwark learn about electromagnetic fields and the properties of the chemical elements by watching and taking part in a series of experiments performed by professional conjurers and play leaders.

Regina Bash-Taqi, who runs the science project at the Lighthouse after-school club, said that the performances had been such a success with children who attend her Saturday morning classes that she now hopes to set up a business providing scientific birthday parties for children.

The Little Atom Science Project, Ms Bash-Taqi said: "When I was doing my post-graduate research in chemistry at Imperial College, I had a professor who was an inspiration to me - he was very interested in promoting public understanding of science and has been a great inspiration to me."

Regional winners

- North East: Nargis Haq of North Benwell Black Residents Support Group; Nora Phipps, Benwell Christian Shop. North West: Faye Selvan, Community Health and Resource Centres; Susan Daryshkin, Tinseltown Creative Project. Yorkshire and Humberside: David Potts, Colne Valley Trust; Chris Prescott, Stoodley Grove Training and Enterprise Partnership. West Midlands: Dr Anita Halliday, St Paul's Community Project; Ben Cunningham, The Project Planning Centre. East Midlands: Carl Taylor, Third Wave Centre; Jeannette Sanghera, Karma Nirvana. Southern: Susan Davis, Theobalds, Beverly, Winchester, One Valley Forum. Eastern: Cheryl McGuire, St Theresa Homeless Day Centre; Geoffrey Blackford, BC Trust Group. South West: Mark Gale, Mason Neighbourhood Project; Oz Osborne, West Devon Environmental Network. London: Regina Bash-Taqi, Lighthouse Supplementary School; Rosemary Jones, Community Environmental Education Project. Wales: Tony Crocker, Trunk 2000, Paul Carron, Rhonda Against Illegal Drugs. Scotland: Pat Cassidy, Govan Workshops; Ann Conlan, Drumchapel Health Centre. Northern Ireland: Christine Hagan, The Carew Centre, Newtownards Road Women's Group.

Latest wills

- J. Enoch Powell, Conservative MP for Wolverhampton SW (1950-1974, Ulster Unionist MP for Down South (1974-83, South Down (1983-87, of London SW1), left estate valued at £246,603 net. Winifred Elmer Dutton, of Crew, left estate valued at £400,000 net. She left £1,000 to George Logan alias Dame Ewaine Kirby, and her residuary estate to Patrick Eric alias Dame Hilda Barakat. Sir John Megaw, a Lord Justice of Appeal (1969-80, of London SW3, left estate valued at £196,875 net. Erica Berna Baez, of London W8, left estate valued at £580,082 net. Annette Robson Anderson, of Wrotham, Norfolk, left estate valued at £617,405 net. She left £2,000 to the United Reformed Church, Wrotham. Eric James Scott Bartheleme, of Hove, East Sussex, left estate valued at £1,557,631 net. Kitty Irene Ailman, of Bournemouth, left estate net. Margaret Ann Browne, of London SW6, left estate valued at £681,440 net. Lady (Violet Alison) Duckworth, of Shootash, Romsey, Hampshire, left estate valued at £60,635 net. Douglas Brederon, Fellow of the Society of Valuers and Auctioneers, of Erbstock, Wrexham, left estate valued at £1,004,133 net. Ursula Rosemary Elizabeth Rose, of London SW3, left estate valued at £3,773,435 net. She left £5,000 each to the Hospital for Sick Children, Imperial Cancer Research Fund, the Curie Cancer Care, Cancer Relief Macmillan Fund, Royal College of Surgeons of England, and the International Glaucoma Association.

Marriages

Mr G.E. Jessel and Miss D.I.V. Naish. The marriage took place on Saturday at St Christopher's, Ditteridge, Wiltshire, of Mr George Jessel, elder son of Sir Charles Jessel, of Ashford, Kent, and the late Lady Jessel, to Miss Victoria Naish, youngest daughter of Captain A.J.B. Naish, RN, and Mrs Naish, of Ditteridge Canon John Ayers officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Harriet Burkes, Charlotte James, Camilla Jessel, Matilda Lasseter, Louisa Reed, Sophie Sutton and Anna Wills. Mr Richard Wills was best man. A reception was held at Hartham Park, Corsham, and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr B.R.C. Fitzpatrick and Miss M.V. Callaghan. The marriage took place on Saturday in Westminster Abbey of Mr Brian Fitzpatrick, only son of General Sir Desmond Fitzpatrick, of Ouley, Suffolk, and the late Lady Fitzpatrick, to Miss Maria Callaghan, eldest daughter of the late A.W. Callaghan and of Mrs Callaghan, of Piddlehinton, Dorset. Canon Donald Gray officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her brother, Mr Andrew Callaghan, was attended by Esther Dolman, Clare and Lucy Mills, Sabrina Callaghan and Louisa and Catherine Anagnani. Mr Michael Pridoux was best man. A reception was held in the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Dr M.S. Appleton and Miss N.E. Gray. The marriage took place on Saturday, April 25, at All Saints' Church, Gosforth, between Mark Appleton and Nadine Gray.

Mr P.N.G. Bond and Miss D.A. Archer. The marriage took place on Saturday at St Nicholas' Church, Otham, Kent, of Mr Philip Nicholas Giles Bond, youngest son of the Rev David Bond and the late Eileen Bond, of Maidstone, to Miss Deborah Anne Archer, elder daughter of Mr and Mrs Colin Archer, of Bridgewood, Chatham. The groom's father officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by her sister, Mrs Amanda Jayne Brown, Mr James Mackay was best man. Mr C.H.D. Denning and Mrs E.J. Wellesley. The marriage took place on April 25, in Tumberidge Wells, between David Denning and Elizabeth Wellesley.

Mr R.L.A. Morgan and Miss S.L. Jackson. The marriage took place on Saturday at Christ Church, Kensington, of Mr Richard Morgan, son of Mr and Mrs Michael Morgan, of Eastbourne, to Miss Lucy Jackson, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ian Jackson, of Kensington. The Rev Andrew Pearson officiated.

The bride, who was given in marriage by her father, was attended by Kate Boshoff, Samantha Chieme, Poppy de Broglie and James Rodgers. Mr James Pritchard was best man. A reception was held at the Roof Gardens, Kensington, and the honeymoon will be spent abroad.

Mr A.D. Nunn and Mrs S.L. Hodges. The marriage took place on Saturday, April 25, 1998, in Cardigan, West Wales, between Andrew Nunn and Shirley Hodges.

Mr K.J. Santry and Miss E.S. Smith. The marriage took place on Saturday, April 25, in St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, London, of Mr Kevin Santry, son of Major and Mrs Noel Santry, of Staines, Middlesex, to Miss Emma Smith, daughter of Mr and Mrs Roger Smith, of Norwich, Norfolk. The Rev Johnny Hughes officiated.

The bride was attended by Miss Claire Jones and Hannah Drohan. Mr Barry Welsh was best man. A reception was held at the Honourable Artillery Company and the honeymoon is being spent in Australia.

Forthcoming marriages

Major M.M. Bull and Mrs H.M. Howitt. The engagement is announced between Matthew, elder son of the late Michael Bull and of the Hon Mrs Noreen Bull, of London, and Helen, younger daughter of the late Rev F.A. Woodward and of Mrs Mary Woodward, of Lostwithiel, Cornwall.

Ing L. Ciolecchia and Miss R.J. Dobson. The engagement is announced between Lucio, son of the late Signor Oronzo Ciolecchia and of Signora Maria Nicola, of Ciolecchia, of Naples, Italy, and Rebecca, daughter of Vice-Admiral Sir David and Lady Dobson, of Petersfield, Hampshire.

Mr C.C. Cox and Miss K.M. Macnab. The engagement is announced between Christopher, younger son of Mr and Mrs Stephen Cox, of Dabross, near Oldham, Lancashire, and Katie, younger daughter of the Macnab and of the Hon Mrs Macnab of Macnab, of Leuchars, Fife.

Mr J.A. Emmott and Miss L.M. Ewing. The engagement is announced between James, son of Mr J.S.D. Emmott and Mrs D.R. Emmott, of London, and Lindsey, younger daughter of Mr and Mrs W.M. Ewing, of Lancashire.

Lieutenant S.R.R. Hannay and Miss K.C. Miller. The engagement is announced between Stephen, youngest son of Professor and Mrs David Hannay, of Kirkcaldy, Wiltshire, and Kate, younger daughter of Dr and Mrs Graham Miller, of Telford, Wiltshire.

Anniversaries today

BIRTHS: Edward Gibbon, historian, London, 1737; Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, pioneer of women's rights, London, 1759; Samuel Morse, painter and inventor of the telegraphic code bearing his name, Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1791; Ulysses Grant, general, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1822; Edward Whymper, mountaineer and wood engraver, London, 1840; Cecil Day-Lewis, poet Laureate 1968-72, and as Nicholas Blake, writer of detective stories, Ballintubbert, Co Laois, 1904; Sheila Scott, aviator, Worcester, 1927.

DEATHS: Jan Van Goyen, landscape painter, The Hague, 1656; Thomas S.T. Jackson, painter, London, 1834; William Macready, actor-manager, Cheltenham, 1873; Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet, Concord, Massachusetts, 1882; Alexander Scriabin, composer, Moscow, 1915; Ed Murray, broadcaster, New York, 1965; Kwame Nkrumah, Prime Minister of Ghana 1957-60, Bucharest, 1972.

The London Zoological Gardens opened Regent's Park, 1833. Britain recognised the state of Israel, 1950.

The Abortion Act, presented by David Steel, MP, became law, 1968.

School news

Malvern Girls' College. The Summer Term begins today. The College musical production of *Wickiwock* will be performed on May 1 and 2. The Old Girls' Association meets at Malvern on May 2. College Confirmation takes place on May 16. Half Term is May 22-27. Founders' Day, Prize Giving and Commemoration Service will be on Friday, July 10. Term ends on Friday, July 10.

Bishop Trevor Huddleston

There will be a Requiem Eucharist for Bishop Trevor Huddleston at St James's, Piccadilly, on Thursday, April 30, at 6.30pm. For further information, telephone: 0171-734 4511.

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BIRTHS

BROWN - On April 14th to Oxford to Jane (née Longridge) and Dylan, a son. Arthur. On 22nd April at Queen Elizabeth's to Jane (née Downey) and Richard, a son, Guy Sebastian. Father celebrating!

DEATHS

BROOKS - Albert Henry, on 20th April 1998, aged 82. Funeral Service to take place on Wednesday 29th April at 11.00am at St Michael & St Anne's Church, Wokingham. The Rev. Dr. Ian Haines and Son, Fareham, 01323 77181.

FOR SALE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Jetworld. Tel: 01273 277877

DEATHS

ARNELL - Michael David. On 22nd April 1998, aged 62. Funeral service on Friday May 1st (followed by private cremation). Family flowers only. If wished donations to Ruth Mays Special Trustees Fund c/o Ashton Parsons Divisors, 140 Alexandra Road, London SW19 7JY. (0181-946 1051).

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OBITUARIES

SIR CHARLES FRANK

Sir Charles Frank, OBE, FRS, physicist, died in Bristol on April 5 aged 87. He was born on March 6, 1911.

Sir Charles Frank was an inspirational physicist who worked in a wide range of fields, from earthquakes to cold fusion. His great contributions to science were in the field of dislocation theory and liquid crystals (used now in computer displays), but he will be remembered by the public mostly for the part he played in detecting and countering the German air defence radar system in France during the war. The successful Bruneval commando raid of February 1942, which delivered the secrets of the shortwave German anti-aircraft radar into British hands was made possible by his astonishing skill at interpreting the scant photographic evidence procured by reconnaissance aircraft.

By a similar sharp instinct for any discrepancy, he found, on another occasion, the small speck - so slight that they had to look on several photographs to check that it was not simply a speck of dust on the negative - which led to the successful raid on the Würzburg radar station at Bruneval, near Le Havre. After the war Frank began research at the H. H. Wills Physical Laboratory at Bristol University, where he was made a research fellow in theoretical physics in 1948. From 1951 to 1954 he was reader in physics and from 1954 to 1969 he was professor of physics. From then on he was Henry Overton Wills Professor of Physics and director of the laboratory until his nominal retirement in 1976.



posed that a new layer would not be needed if the whole crystal consisted of a single layer in the form of a helix, like a spiral staircase; in other words there had to be a screw dislocation on the growth axis. When he suggested this idea at a conference, a member of his audience was immediately able to confirm his theory by producing photographs

he highly productive, and he also had a lively interest in geophysics, where his work is perhaps less appreciated than it might be. As early as 1968 he thought of the Earth's mantle as being not only solid but having liquid channels between the crystal grains, which would contribute to the flow of heat. This two-phase picture is now central to thinking about volcanism and the large-scale flow of the mantle. Charles Frank received many honorary degrees and other honours. Knighted in 1977, he served as a vice-president of the Royal Society, and two years later he was awarded the Royal Medal. In 1994 he also received its premier award, the Copley Medal. In 1993, Frank directed the publication of Operation Epsilon: The Farm Hall Transcripts, a full and scholarly documentation of previously secret recordings made of discussion among ten German scientists detained near Cambridge at the end of the war as the first nuclear weapons were unleashed on Japan. Concerned with both the benefits and the dangers of nuclear technology, Frank was a member of the Pugwash movement, which was launched by Bertrand Russell after the war to raise international awareness about the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

KITCH CHRISTIE

George "Kitch" Christie, South African national rugby coach, died of pneumonia on April 22, aged 58. He was born on January 31, 1940.

AFTER his all too brief tenure as South Africa's national coach, Kitch Christie was described as the right man in the right place at the right time. Not only did he coach the team that won the World Cup in 1995, but he brought an honesty and decency to the role at a time when the sport seemed on the verge of opening South Africa to the world. The management team of which he was part treated so positive an image of the traditional "white man's sport" that Nelson Mandela, the state president, publicly identified rugby as part of a nation-building exercise. In the drive towards the World Cup final, Christie's team was embraced by the black population as the Amabokoboko, a play on the nickname given the popular football side, Orlando Pirates.

Christie took over the coaching reins from Natal's Ian McIntosh in the autumn of 1994 - in what he described as a "hospitals job" since there were by then only nine months to go before South Africa was to host the World Cup and consistent success on the international field had eluded it since its return to world sport in 1992. It was the start of a run of 14 matches and 14 victories, six of them in the World Cup tournament which opened against Australia in Cape Town and concluded in the extra-time final against New Zealand. Success was founded on Christie's defensive strategy, which conceded only five tries in the tournament, and on his suffocating pressure game, which forced even the tournament's star, the giant but immature New Zealand wing, Jonah Lomu, into error. When it was over Christie said he would retire, but he stayed until the visit to England that autumn. Then the management team was dismantled and Christie - who was later sacked in unpleasant circumstances as Northern Transvaal coach - was left to regret a singular development opportunity wasted by the administrators. He was married twice. He is survived by his second wife, Judy, and by two daughters from his first marriage and a son from his second.

MEL POWELL

Mel Powell, composer and jazz musician, died in Los Angeles on April 24 aged 75. He was born on February 12, 1923.

MEL POWELL was a chameleon among musicians, straddling the worlds of the classics and jazz with deceptive ease. A man who won a Pulitzer Prize for composition, was profiled in The New Yorker and taught composition at Yale deserved to be thought of as one of the leading American serious musicians of his day. Yet mention his name among the older habitués of the New York jazz scene, and they will immediately think of him as Benny Goodman's piano player. He wrote a good deal for synthesizers, which he believed should have an important role, but his standing among sceptical classical musicians was not much enhanced by this. He was a product of the milieu of George Gershwin and Leonard Bernstein, and

one of his closest friends was André Previn, who is also both a jazzman and a classical musician. Powell's problem was that he lacked both the deep abiding ambition of such men, and that he had little sense of public relations. He believed his talent would get him as far as he was capable of going, and was not willing to push the boat out any further than he felt he could swim safely back to shore. He always underestimated the length of that stretch of water. He was born in New York as Melvin Epstein, a name that might have served him better in the field of classical music, to which he became addicted as a child. His home, overlooking the Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, was more used to the Talmudic chanting of the grandfather with whom he lived than to any other kind of music, but he was encouraged to learn the piano, and later remembered his childhood happily. At the age of 13 he discovered

the big band scene, and was so captivated by hearing the Benny Goodman Band play at the Paramount Theatre that he managed to hide among the crowd and sit through five successive performances of the show. He was hooked. By 15, he was playing in New York jazz clubs with people like Art Tatum, Bobby Hackett and Sidney Bechet. Three years later, he enrolled at New York's city college, changing his name and joining the band that had so enthralled him. He wrote as well as playing piano for Benny Goodman, and this gave him not only superb experience, but a fund of less than flattering stories about his boss. In his early years he also played with Count Basie and Duke Ellington, and he spent his war service playing with America's best-known orchestra, Glenn Miller's Army Air Force Band, before returning to Benny Goodman for a year at the end of hostilities. But if



He studied with Paul Hindemith at Yale, and before long he was teaching there himself, eventually taking Hindemith's place as professor of composition. From 1969 to 1978 he was dean of the music department at the California Institute of the Arts, where he not only lectured, but wrote learned articles on, among others, Brahms, Stravinsky and Hindemith. His own compositions ranged from chamber music to elec-

tronic pieces. Three Synthesizer Settings is perhaps the closest that electronic music has come to being accepted by more conventional musicologists, but he also promoted the cause in a number of articles. His best-known work was his Haiku Setting for soprano and piano, written in 1961. He was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for Duplications, a concerto for two pianos and orchestra. Even in recent years, when his health was seriously affected by a muscle-wasting disease, he was the least pompous of pedagogues. Once, after a lecture on the great composers of the 20th century, he turned to his students and said: "Now what would you like to hear me play? How about Honeysuckle Rose?" A big man with white hair, he was also a gifted painter, and several exhibitions of his watercolours have been held. He was married to the film actress Martha Scott, who survives him.

JEAN-PAUL DE ROCCA-SERRA

Jean-Paul de Rocca-Serra, leading Corsican politician, died in Paris on April 6 aged 86. He was born in Bonifacio, Corsica, on October 11, 1911.

A MEMBER of Corsica's most powerful political dynasty, Jean-Paul de Rocca-Serra had been a dominant figure in the island's turbulent political life for most of the years since the Second World War. Known as the "Silver Fox" because of his thick, well-groomed silver hair (and his political cunning) or as "sgio", a dialect word for seigneur or Godfather, he sat at the centre of a

network of clans, claiming to know just about everyone on the island. Above all, he was a master fixer for whom no affair was too small, particularly if it brought in votes. However, he came to represent inaction on broader issues and was powerless to prevent bombings and killings by extreme nationalists, culminating in the murder recently of the Prefect, Claude Erignac. He could trace his family back to the 16th century. One ancestor was justice minister to Napoleon III, and his grandfather and father were both deputies for the south of the island, where the family

had its estates. There was a break in the political succession when Rocca-Serra's father was disbarred from politics and sentenced to "indignité nationale" after the war for having supported Marshal Pétain. Within a few years, however, the reins were assumed by the son, who had served with distinction during the war as the crack Tirailleurs Marocains regiment in the final campaigns in Italy, France and up to the Danube. Rocca-Serra worked as a doctor and then entered Corsican politics in 1949 as a departmental councillor. The

next step was election as mayor and parliamentary deputy for Porto Vecchio, one of the island's best known resorts. During a 50-year political career, he occupied just about every post of significance on the island, ending up as president of the territorial assembly, the local parliament, although the purpose of setting this up in 1984 had been to curb the power of the traditional political families. Last year, the Gaullists suggested that at 85 it was time for Rocca-Serra to stand down. He ignored this, ran as an independent and was re-elected to the National Assembly in Paris, where he had served since 1962. His last act was to install his son, Camille, as mayor of Porto Vecchio, so demonstrating that politics on the island can still be a family affair. It was said that Rocca-Serra knew how to handle friend and foe, and, above all, when to turn a blind eye. He did business with Communists, Nationalists, leading Gaullists and even members of the powerful Corsican underworld, with its offshoots in Marseilles and Paris. He was, however, known for many acts of generosity towards poor families and those in trouble. Rocca-Serra survived his



Church news

Appointments: The Rev Peter Bradley, Team Vicar, Abingdon St Michael and All Angels (Oxford); to be Team Vicar, High Wycombe All Saints and St Peter (same diocese). The Rev Edwin Clarke, with permission to officiate (Lichfield); has been given permission to officiate (Birmingham). The Rev Christine Dale, Assistant Curate, Thatcham (Oxford); to be Team Vicar, Bradwell with special responsibility for Harmanwater St Paul (same diocese). The Rev Tony Ellis, Vicar, Stratfield Mortimer, and Priest-in-Charge, Mortimer West End w Padworth (Oxford); to be Team Vicar, Kilmington w Hampton Boyle (same diocese). The Rev Peter Gascoigne, Vicar, New Rossington St Luke (Sheffield); to be Vicar, Billham (same diocese). The Rev Clive Gregory, Chaplain, Warwick University (Coventry); to be Team Rector, Coventry East (same diocese). The Rev John Hallows, Assistant Curate, Rochnor St John the

Evangelist (Oxford); to be Team Vicar, Bradwell with special responsibility for Forest Park, and Deansery Training Officer (same diocese). Canon John Holmes, Diocesan Missioner (Ripon); to be Canon Missioner (Wakefield). The Rev Mike Houston, Team Vicar, Woughton (Oxford); to be Team Rector, same benefice. The Rev Ian McMaster, Vicar, Woodhall Spa Group (Birmingham); permission to officiate (same diocese). The Rev Carole Munn, Assistant Chaplain, HMP Lincoln, and NSM Assistant Curate, Saxonwell (Lincoln); to be NSM Assistant Curate, Claypole (same diocese). The Rev Susan Phillipson-Masters, Curate, Nailsea w Tickenham (Bristol); to be Priest-in-Charge, Tredington and Darlington w Newbold-on-Stour (Coventry). The Rev John Price, Midlands Regional Co-ordinator of Crosslinks (Birmingham); permission

to officiate (same diocese). The Rev Michael Price, Vicar, Neithorn St Andrew (Worcester); to be also Assistant Rural Dean of Dudley (same diocese). The Rev Anne Roberts, NSM, Meole Brace (Lichfield); to be also part-time chaplain, Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic and District Hospital NHS Trust (same diocese). Canon Gordon Taylor, Vicar, Coole (Sheffield); to be also Rural Dean of Strathclyde Hatfield (same diocese). The Rev Timothy Thompson, Priest-in-Charge, Surfleet (Lincoln); to be also Rural Dean of Elloe West (same diocese). The Rev Ian Walker, Rector, Keyingham w Otringham, Haltham and Sunk Island, and Rural Dean of South Holderness (York); to be Vicar, Scartho (Lincoln). The Rev Andrew White, Assistant Curate, South Wintobledon Holy Trinity and St Peter (Southwark); to be Team Vicar, Droitwich Spa

THE NEWFOUNDLAND SEAL FISHERY DISASTER

Our correspondent at St. Johns, Newfoundland sends further details of the disaster to the crew of the sealing steamer Greenland off Cape Bonaville, in which 55 lives were lost through exposure on an ice-floe. The Greenland, Captain George Barbour, 210 men, was one of a fleet of 19 steamers which left Newfoundland on March 10 to prosecute the seal-fishery which opens on that date each year. The seal herd is found on the great floes which drift south from the Arctic regions at that season, and the steamers usually find the seals off the northeast coast of the island. The fishery is of short duration, and large numbers of men are therefore carried on board the ships. The Greenland is specially built for work among the ice-floes and carry from 200 to 300 men. The Greenland sighted the main "patch" of seals on the 19th, and for the next week her men were busy killing them as they lay on the floe, and hauling the "pelts" aboard. On the morning of Monday, March 21, she again put her men out on the ice, dropping the four "walches" of seal hunters a mile or two apart. Then she cruised about for a few hours, picking up the dead seals, but the weather began to assume a threatening aspect, she put about in order to pick up the first watch, which she succeeded in doing; though the gale burst fiercely before she could reach the others. During that evening and night

ON THIS DAY

April 27, 1898

When gales and snowstorms struck the Newfoundland seal-fishing fleet, the lighted sealers were trapped all night on the shifting floes. It was later believed that 55 men were lost through exposure or drowning. The Greenland, Captain George Barbour, 210 men, was one of a fleet of 19 steamers which left Newfoundland on March 10 to prosecute the seal-fishery which opens on that date each year. The seal herd is found on the great floes which drift south from the Arctic regions at that season, and the steamers usually find the seals off the northeast coast of the island. The fishery is of short duration, and large numbers of men are therefore carried on board the ships. The Greenland is specially built for work among the ice-floes and carry from 200 to 300 men. The Greenland sighted the main "patch" of seals on the 19th, and for the next week her men were busy killing them as they lay on the floe, and hauling the "pelts" aboard. On the morning of Monday, March 21, she again put her men out on the ice, dropping the four "walches" of seal hunters a mile or two apart. Then she cruised about for a few hours, picking up the dead seals, but the weather began to assume a threatening aspect, she put about in order to pick up the first watch, which she succeeded in doing; though the gale burst fiercely before she could reach the others. During that evening and night

doomed to a night upon the floe, were in a terrible position. From the narratives of the survivors it appears that they divided themselves into two companies, which set to work to improvise shelters, using all the fragments of ice and hard snow they could find. But even this availed them little against the blinding snowstorm and the intense cold of the floe which gave them footing. They tried to keep up their warmth by running about, but the effort after their hard day's toil was too great, and weak and dispirited they abandoned these caravans and huddled together for warmth; and in vain search for the ship, only to fall benumbed and perish as they lay. Others suffered tortures from frost bites, and a few lost their reason. The first man died at midnight, and those in the group with him left the "part" or fragment of ice in order to avoid the proximity of the corpse. Towards morning others perished. The action of the wind and sea split the floe and the currents turned it about, some of the men being washed off and drowned. Nine men were adrift on one of these "parts" and two succumbed. The others spent the night by the bodies and got on to the main floe only the next day. Another group killed a seal, and, making a fire with their ropes and clubs, roasted it. All through the night the shrieks of the suffering and despairing men were heard. The gale continued the next morning and the number of victims grew larger. But in the afternoon the weather became less inclement, and the ship soon forced her way in among the pans, where the dead and dying sealers lay.

NEWS

Prince targets areas in need

The Prince of Wales is launching an unprecedented initiative - over the heads of politicians - to identify Britain's 40 most deprived areas and urge business leaders to make life there better.

Payment to Mary Bell defended

The author of the forthcoming book about Mary Bell defended a payment to the child killer for her collaboration. Gitta Sereny said access to Ms Bell helped her to produce a serious analysis of the reasons why children become killers, which could "only be in the public interest."

Drive against drink

Up to 50,000 drink-drivers a year will have to prove that they do not have a serious alcohol problem before being allowed back on the road under plans aimed at hardened drinkers.

More custard, please

Children are turning against the lunchbox culture of the past two decades and going back to school dinners. Favourites like sponge pudding and custard are making a comeback.

Carey controversy

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, stepped into a theological minefield by calling for the Roman Catholic Church to abandon its ruling that forbids Protestants from receiving communion in its churches.

Cool Britannia

The slowly emerging Greenwich Dome has become the defining image of the Blair Government. Labour's first year in power.

School shooting

A teenager known as Satan has been charged as an adult for shooting at a high school dance in Pennsylvania, killing a master and wounding two pupils and another teacher.

'Bobby' threatened

The traditional "bobby on the beat" could vanish from the streets according to Sir Paul Condon, the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Plea for women

The Lord Chancellor launched a campaign to attract more women to apply for the judiciary, with the slogan "Don't be shy, apply" and admonishing them for lacking confidence.

Israel's terror spy

The terror attacks that eroded Britain's resolve to continue its Mandate over Palestine and hastened the creation of Israel were assisted by a Jewish spy in British military headquarters.

Beach peril

Britain's beaches are dirtier than ever, according to a new bathing guide. Swimmers risk infection off many major resorts.

Flood of poison

Spanish authorities fought to prevent poisonous waste from flooding Europe's biggest natural park and most important wetland bird breeding ground.

Royal village

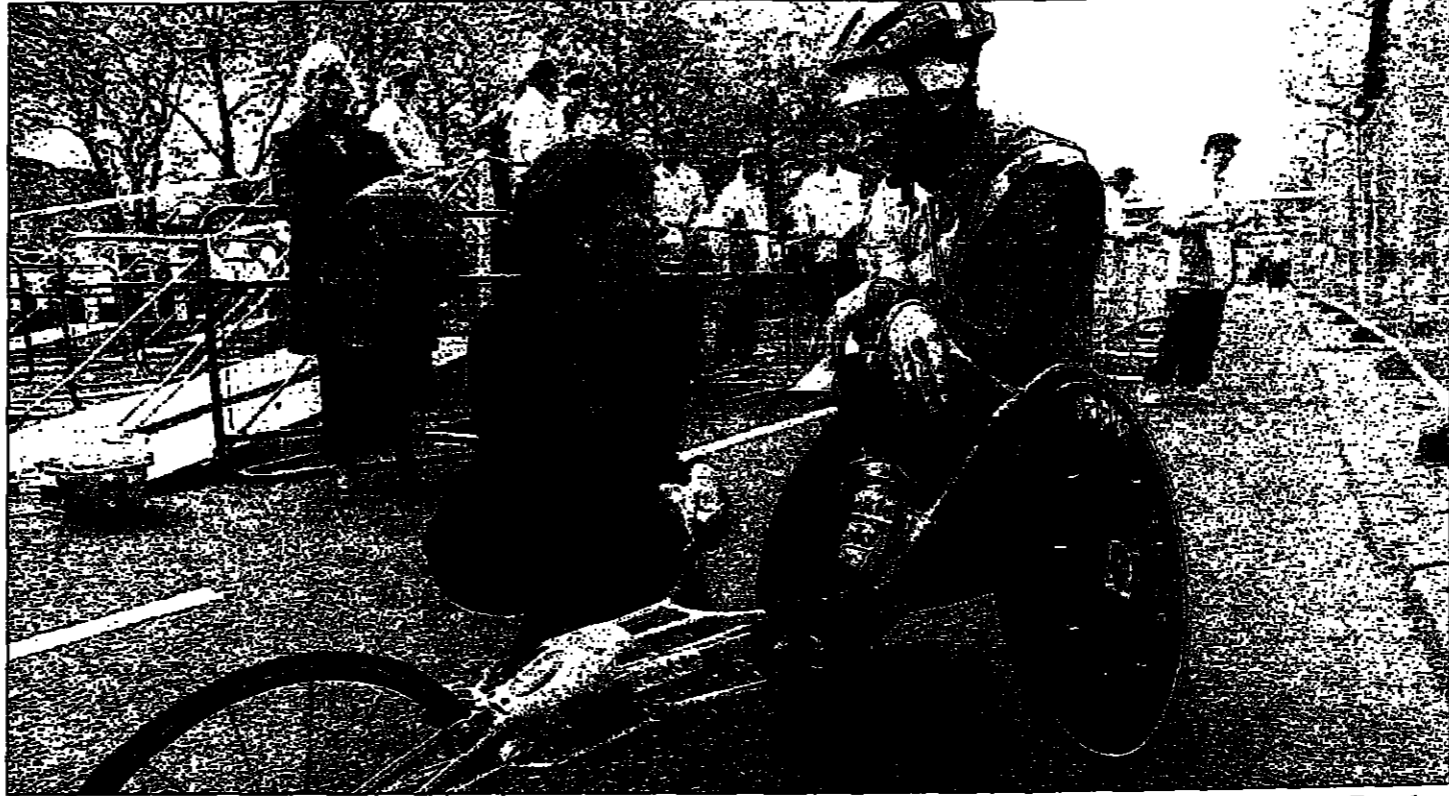
The Queen and Duke of Edinburgh are to pay their first visit to Poundbury, the model village being built by the Prince of Wales in Dorset.

Kosovo clash

Villagers on Kosovo's border with Albania told how teenage gun-runners fled from Serbian police and soldiers in a clash that killed at least 19.

MCC faces fresh test against women

The MCC is preparing for a fiery annual meeting next week when it announces a plan to resolve the women members' dispute and faces a rebellion over World Cup tickets. A fresh ballot on admitting women could be held this year.



Cherie Blair, the Prime Minister's wife, with Heinz Frei of Switzerland, yesterday's London marathon wheelchair winner. Page 1

BUSINESS

Astra case: The Government sought to withhold an official document in its attempt to prosecute four former directors of Astra, the collapsed armaments company involved in the Jonathan Aitken arms-to-Iran scandal.

FEATURES

In the second of three extracts from his autobiography Christopher Reeve - the actor best known as Superman - describes his terror when his ventilator was suddenly disconnected, and how he learnt to breathe again.

ARTS

Melvyn Bragg: "As far as Hollywood is concerned, the Englishman who used to be a gentleman, a fine soldier, a good egg, even a bright color is now the convenient hate figure."

SPORT

Motor racing: David Coulthard suffered an anxious last few laps but held on to win the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola.

FASHION

New zip: Combine that old street favourite, the zip jacket, with pleated skirts and leggings for the new utilitarian look.

TRAVEL

Transatlantic trade: American actors are everywhere in the West End these days, yet British actors are still finding it difficult to crack Broadway.

CHILDREN

Children's classic: Stranawaldpeter, Hoffmann's collection of horror-strewn children's verse, has been set to music in a new staging at the Lyric in Hammersmith.

OPINION

Motor racing: David Coulthard suffered an anxious last few laps but held on to win the San Marino Grand Prix at Imola.

SPORT

Football: Leicester City scored four goals in the opening 15 minutes of the game to overwhelm Derby County in the East Midlands derby.

SPORT

Rugby league: Waisale Sovatabua, of Sheffield Eagles, may miss the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final at Wembley on Saturday after being sent off against Huddersfield Giants.

SPORT

Rugby union: Newcastle could not recapture the fluency they showed earlier in the season, but still moved a step closer to the Allied Dunbar Premiership title by beating Bristol 43-18.

SPORT

Rugby league: Waisale Sovatabua, of Sheffield Eagles, may miss the Silk Cut Challenge Cup final at Wembley on Saturday after being sent off against Huddersfield Giants.



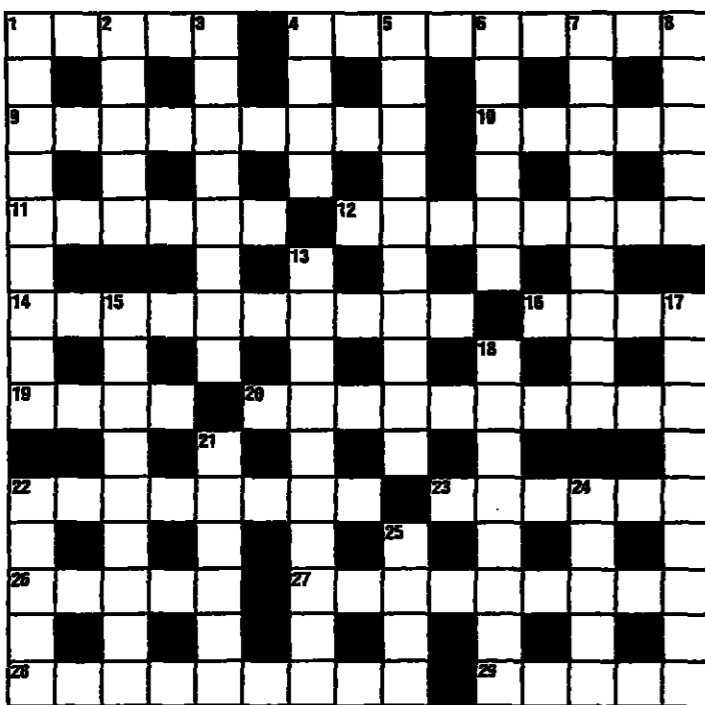
TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

ARTS: Why success stories like the Serpentine make Richard Cork proud of the Arts Council

LAW: Three accident victims challenge the way their damages were calculated

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,776



- ACROSS: 1 Grim place associated with Lancaster (5). 4 Special sort of vehicle for Toad, perhaps (9). 9 Advance payment African province required before delivery (9). 10 Like a sovereign prince of the French state (5). 11 Run in and stop (6). 12 Booth, for example, with beastly twins inside (8). 14 Watch army exercise that provides up-to-date intelligence (6,4). 16 Morse's part cut for stylistic effect (4). 19 Morse as alternative for this statesman? (4). 20 Fine publicity surrounding our type of bed (4-6). 22 Coach caught replacing Middlesex opener at start of match (8). 23 Argue with opposing players, being thin on the ground (6).

The solution of Saturday's Prize Puzzle No 20,775 will appear next Saturday. The five winners will each receive a £20 book token.

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HOURS OF DARKNESS

Sun sets: 5:41 am. Sun sets: 6:17 pm. Moon sets: 9:36 pm. Moon rises: 6:42 am.

ABROAD

Table with columns for location, temperature, and other weather-related data for various international cities.

FORECAST

General: another mix of clouds and sun with scattered showers. The best of the sunshine will probably be early on and again towards evening. Showers will break out quickly in Scotland, Northern Ireland, West and West Country, whereas in central and eastern England most of the showers will be in the afternoon.

AROUND BRITAIN

Table showing weather forecasts for various regions in Britain, including temperature, wind, and precipitation.

ABROAD

Table showing weather forecasts for various international locations, including temperature, wind, and precipitation.

MOON TODAY



HIGH TIDES

Table showing high tide times for various locations, including location, time, and height.

HIGHEST & LOWEST

Table showing the highest and lowest temperatures for various locations, including location, highest temperature, and lowest temperature.

TV LISTINGS

Review: Paul Hoggart takes a classy stroll through England, My England. Preview: Three weddings and a skeleton staff (Hotel, BBC1 9.30pm)..... Page 51

OPINION

One year on

That Mr Blair has more in common with first-time Labour voters than with the traditionalist working class may be unsettling for much of the party, but is a huge political and electoral advantage..... Page 23

The story of Mary Bell

It is in all our interests and in the true public interest that an account that casts light on one of the darkest questions be published and that it be read..... Page 23

Wreck of the Adriatic

Venice in Peril has made far more than simply a financial contribution to the future of the city. Now the Italian Government must listen to its cries for action..... Page 23

COLUMNS

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Ultimate reversion from the crime is no justification for public hysteria. In the first place, there is now virtually nothing to fear from Sidney Cooke himself..... Page 22

PETER RIDDELL

Blair dominates the political landscape. But he has yet to establish firm foundations for the still indistinct edifice of Blairism..... Page 22

OPINIONS

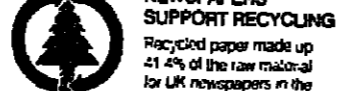
Sir Charles Frank, physicist; Mel Powell, composer and jazz player; Kitch Christie, South African rugby coach..... Page 25

LETTERS

Plight of Iraqi people: "feather-bedding" of teachers; vetting of staff in children's homes; the Church and homosexuality; MCC vote on women; Competition Bill; persistent diseases..... Page 23

THE PAPERS

Boris Yeltsin has scored a personal success in persuading the Duma to approve Sergei Kiriyenko as Russian Prime Minister. But many key posts remain in the hands of Kremlin veterans, and the problems which the Kiriyenko government will confront are the same as its predecessors, including balancing the budget..... La Repubblica



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APRIL 27 1998

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Who is the world's best goalscorer? PAGE 33

FRENCH POLISH

Olivier Peslier takes up the reins as Europe's top jockey PAGE 44

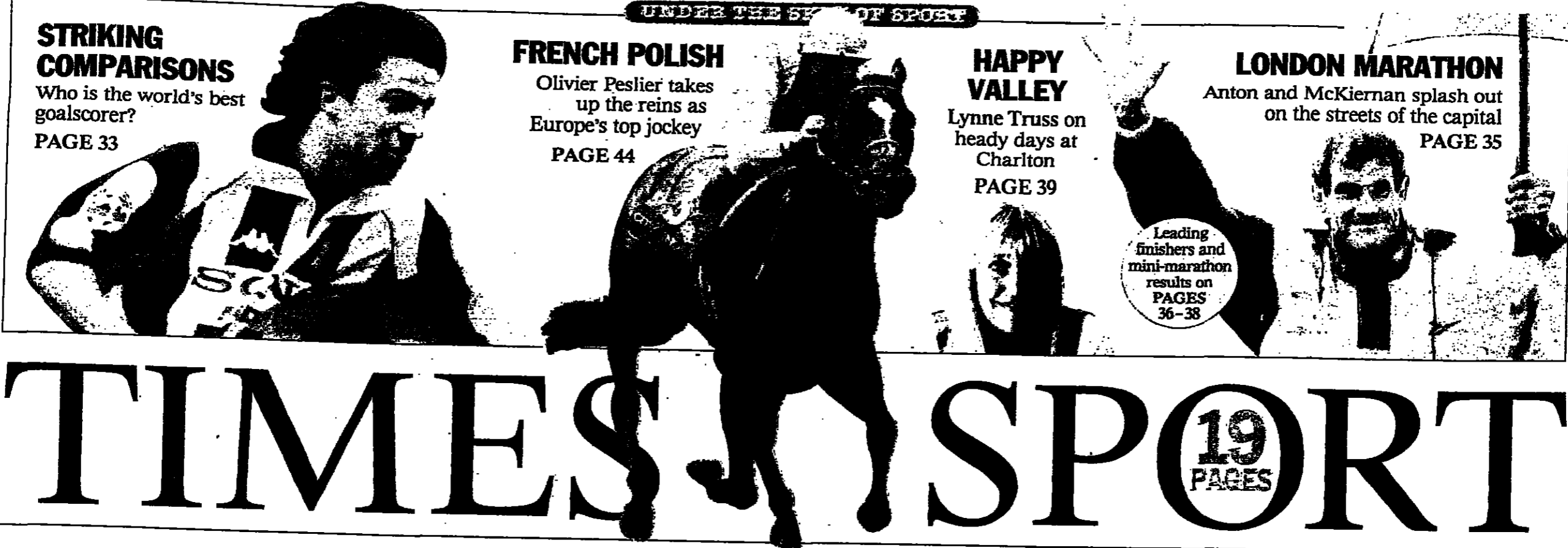
HAPPY VALLEY

Lynne Truss on heady days at Charlton PAGE 39

LONDON MARATHON

Anton and McKiernan splash out on the streets of the capital PAGE 35

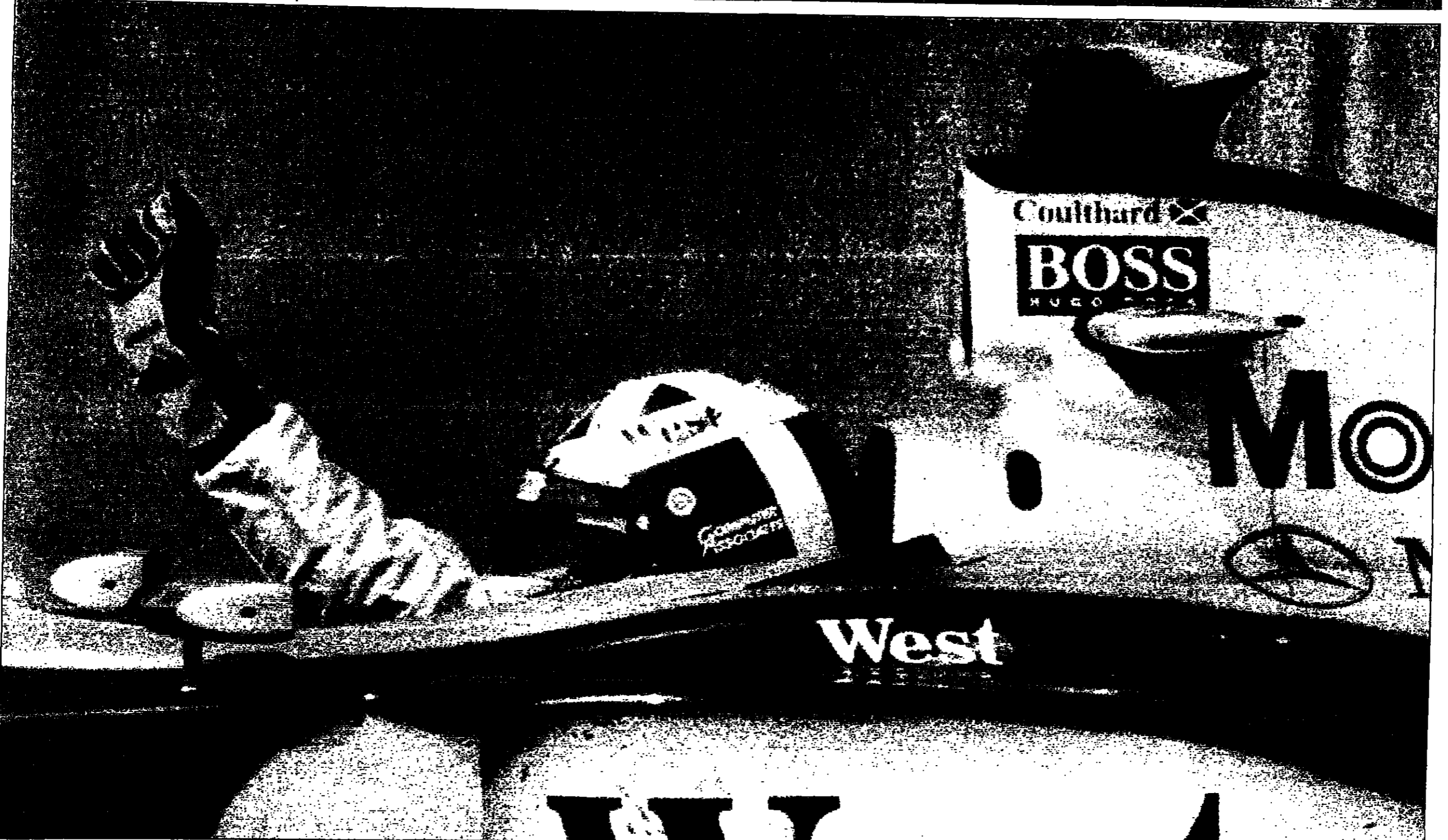
Leading finishers and mini-marathon results on PAGES 36-38



TIMES SPORT 19 PAGES

MONDAY APRIL 27 1998

MCLAREN DRIVER'S CHAMPIONSHIP CHALLENGE GATHERS SPEED



Coulthard gives a clenched-fist salute after his impressive victory at Imola yesterday and then salutes the crowd as he celebrates on the winner's podium. Photographs: Paolo Cocco and Claudio Onorati

Coulthard steers path to glory

FROM ROB HUGHES IN IMOLA

ON THE hill overlooking La Curva della Rivazza at Imola yesterday, Ferrari flags outnumbered everything, creating an impression of a huge blanket of poppies. However, a lone and defiant Scottish flag fluttered there and David Coulthard, winning his first grand prix of the season, offered mock apology. "I saw it," he said. "It's embarrassing. I told my Mum not to go in there."

Down on the track, under a relentless 30-degree heat, Coulthard drove a race of such consummate control that not even the 120,000 Italian tifosi, the Ferrari supporters waving on their two scarlet cars, could distract him. Coulthard, in his McLaren-Mercedes, won the San Marino Grand Prix easing up: the Ferraris of Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine were second and third respectively.

And so Coulthard, the Scot labelled "too gentlemanly" to be a modern champion, is on the road to proving his critics wrong. The Formula One world title beckons and, while Schumacher did nothing

wrong yesterday, the form says that McLaren have the machinery and, importantly, the tyres, to steer either Mika Hakkinen or Coulthard to the championship this season. Coulthard drove with the single-minded concentration of a man who, no longer under orders or obligation to pull over for anyone, has the desire to become Scotland's first grand prix racing champion since Jackie Stewart in 1973.

Coulthard would have been two years old when Stewart retired at the top and may have been saddened when Stewart recently fuelled the chorus of doubters who suspect that, when the pressure rises, Coulthard's smooth composure gives way. No one on the track challenged a measured and meticulous victory. However, oil temperature in his car was causing anxiety in the McLaren pit.

Coulthard was told to conserve the car and, deciding for himself that there were no extra points for winning by a street, allowed Schumacher to whittle away a 25sec lead to within five seconds. "There was no point finishing farther ahead," Coulthard said. "One tenth of a second is enough, though I wouldn't let it get that

close. When you are out in front, it's hard, physically hard, to drive a grand prix car." Irvine can vouch for that. The Irishman needed an injection into his lower back to counter muscle spasms that he felt after five laps.

"I'm very capable of the championship," Coulthard said. He has 23 points in the drivers' championship. Hakkinen, with more than a little help from his teammate, leads with 26, despite gear failure

Coulthard clings on 29
Results and standings 29

ending his race yesterday. Schumacher lurks on 20.

How Damon Hill, again a non-finisher, must rue passing up McLaren on financial grounds. How he must envy the smooth Scot at the wheel of, so far, the car of 1998. This was Coulthard's fourth grand prix victory from 62 starts. The skills began in Scottish karting have, at 27, matured into a sportsman now rated among Monaco's most eligible bachelors.

Imola and its menacing history have figured large in Coulthard's progress. It was the death of Ayrton Senna at the Tamburello curve here in 1994 that gave Coulthard his opportunity in Formula One with Williams.

Yesterday, Coulthard sensed that the race was his once Hakkinen's gears failed on the seventeenth lap out of the 62. The only concern now was Schumacher. Early on, with a full fuel load, Coulthard's silver-grey McLaren was a second a lap superior to the Ferrari that, despite the new X-wings — that deform the graceful F300 as if upright armrests have been erected either side of the driver — lacks the balance between engine power and adhesion of the McLaren.

"The tifosi are waiting," Schumacher acknowledged. "I had nothing to do but watch them, but I couldn't deliver. I knew David was cruising, though I pushed to the end because you never know." The first Ferrari "home" victory since 1983 was beyond him: McLaren is, for the moment, beyond Ferrari, and it hurts.

Luca di Montezemolo, the Ferrari president, heavily feels the mantle of Enzo

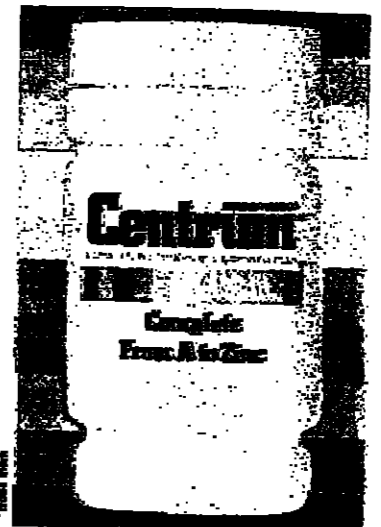
Ferrari. Montezemolo lives close by, in Bologna, but watched, alone as usual, at home. He had come to Imola on Saturday, straight from hospital, where he had a kidney stone removed, to rouse the Ferrari squad. He urged Jean Todt, the Ferrari racing director, to negotiate over everything to prevent Mercedes spiriting away Schumacher in 1999.

"We have the best driver in the world," Montezemolo said, demonstrating how quickly Jerez and Schumacher's indiscretion there last year has been forgiven. "For stability, we need to keep him for the rest of his career."

Nobody is making such overtures to Coulthard yet, but his days of deferring to Hakkinen are over. Yesterday, he answered the questions about in which direction he is headed and, if the pressure was not applied, that is because from first to last he controlled his destiny. Later, showing that chivalry still moves him, he told an attractive Italian television interviewer: "I'm sorry for not giving the home fans what they wanted." He smiled and added: "But I need the ten points. I need a lot of ten-pointers this season."



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SNOOKER

O'Sullivan begins to loom as most potent challenger

By PHIL YATES

IT IS a measure of Ronnie O'Sullivan's abundant talent that, without producing anything approximating his inspirational best, he was able to establish a 7-1 lead over Alan McManus in the last 16 of the Embassy world championship in Sheffield yesterday.

his most glaring piece of misjudgment. Mistakenly believing that he could see enough of a black to pot it early in the seventh frame, contact was made with a red along the route. O'Sullivan pounced with 50 before placing McManus in even deeper trouble by accounting for the eighth with a typically swift break of 72.

O'Sullivan, who, over the



O'Sullivan: in command

session's closing four frames outscored McManus 323-74, was left requiring only six of the next eight to excuse himself from this evening's scheduled third session.

The display underlined the importance of preparation. O'Sullivan had arrived in Bangkok fresh from a jet-setting holiday at a Thai coastal resort. During his stay in Sheffield, he has filled his time almost exclusively with sleeping, eating and practising.

White, maintaining the vintage form that enabled him to cause one of the greatest upsets witnessed at the Cruci-

ble when beating Stephen Hendry in the first round, also took a stride towards the last eight by building a 6-2 lead over Darren Morgan on Saturday.

It was a session that will be remembered for a 143 total clearance, which puts White in line to collect a £19,000 high-stake bonus and is his best in competition since a 147 maximum against Tony Drago during the 1992 championship.

If anything, though, White will gain more satisfaction from the overall discipline of his snooker rather than from one individual aspect of it. The six-times world champion runner-up was entitled to be pleased, having been responsible for additional runs of 83, 87 and 78.

Kelly Fisher won the Embassy women's world championship for the first time by surprisingly white-washing Karen Corr, the titleholder, 5-0. Fisher, 19, from Pontefract, collected a first prize of £5,000.

Corr, who had prevailed in eight of her previous nine tournaments, was expected to lift the trophy for the fourth time since 1990, but Fisher had runs of 34, 52 and 32 in comfortably overcoming the only player above her in the women's rankings.

"Karen has dominated women's snooker for a number of years and to beat her in the world final at the Crucible is unbelievable," Fisher, who recovered from 3-2 down to edge Kim Shaw, of Wisbech, 4-3 in the semi-finals, said.



Bjorn shows off the Spanish Open trophy after his well-deserved victory yesterday

Bjorn reigns in Spain after narrow victory

SCORES in the mid-sixties were two a penny at El Prat all week when there was virtually no wind blowing across this 6,700-yard course on the edge of the Mediterranean, but the one that mattered was the 66 by Thomas Bjorn, his second in succession, that took him to 21 under par in the Peugeot Spanish Open. It gave him victory by one stroke from José María Olazábal and Greg Chalmers.

It was a victory that was well deserved, if a little surprising in that the Dane had not played competitively for five weeks. All afternoon, Bjorn showed the same sort of resolution he had in the singles in the Ryder Cup, when he was four down after four holes to Justin Leonard, the Open champion, and still halved the match.

Bjorn, 27, hit some magnificently long and accurate drives. On the 9th, 10th and 12th for example, he could hardly have driven farther or placed his ball more precisely. On the 8th, he played a wonderful bunker shot from

FROM JOHN HOPKINS GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN BARCELONA

nearly 100 yards and long bunker shots are considered by the pros to be among the most difficult shots in golf. He chipped well and holed out courageously.

His second victory on the PGA European Tour within four months, as well as earning him £91,660, was another reminder that he should have been invited to compete in the Masters earlier this month. "When you feel you should be there, it is a disappointment if you are not," Bjorn said. "I'll be there in the future."

Bjorn was playing with Olazábal, who led by two strokes after the 13th. The Spaniard was focused and determined and, for most of the afternoon, looked as though he would achieve the victory in his country's premier golf tournament that has so far eluded him.

Having got to 20 under par with five birdies in his first 12 holes, however, Olazábal

could not take out any more over the last six holes, where as Bjorn, who was 18 under par as he stood on the 14th tee, then had three in succession: The most important came on the 16th, where he chipped in from the fringe. Olazábal, who was eight feet from the hole in two, left his putt for a birdie an inch short. "When you win a tournament, chipping like that are the sort of things that go your way," Olazábal, whose final round was a 67, said.

At the start yesterday, seven men had been within two strokes of one another and it was clear from Robert Karlsson's 64, in which he birdied only one of the four par-fives, that very low scoring was possible.

Greg Chalmers, the left-handed Australian, who had led by one stroke overnight, had a 69. Having birdied the 9th, 10th and 12th — the three par-fives that held the key to the course — he could do no more. Bjorn, an increasingly impressive golfer, had been too good for him.

SPORT IN BRIEF

Fox-Pitt falls out of Badminton contention

■ EQUESTRIANISM: William Fox-Pitt, who would have been one of the leading Great Britain contenders for the Mitsubishi Badminton Horse Trials next week, will be out of action for three months after breaking his left ankle in a fall from Sue Benson's Chase The Melody in the novice section at Weston Park Horse Trials, Shropshire, on Saturday.

Fox-Pitt, 29, who was being operated on at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford last night, had been due to ride Monica Hunt's ten-year-old Mostly Mischief next week. His top horse, Cosmopolitan, on which he helped Britain win a team gold medal at the Open European Championships at Burghley in September, had been excused Badminton to save him for the world championships in Rome in October. Fox-Pitt's withdrawal follows last week's announcement that Mary King will miss Badminton after injuries to her two horses, Star Appeal and King Solomon.

England retain titles

■ SQUASH: England completed a successful double defence of their European team championship titles yesterday by defeating Germany's women and Finland's men in the finals at Espoo, near Helsinki. "It gets tougher every year," Stuart Courtney, the England manager, said after the women's team had recorded their 21st successive victory and his men their 23rd in 26 years.

Nothing illustrated Courtney's words better than the marathon first-string rubber lost by Simon Parke, the British champion, who went down 9-7 in the fifth game to Juha Raunio, while his colleagues, Del Harris, Chris Walker and Mark Chaloner were cleaning up in the lower order. The England first-string in the women's match, Sue Wright had to come from 2-1 down against Sabine Schone before winning 4-9, 9-4, 5-0, 9-0, 9-3.

Monarchs off the mark

■ AMERICAN FOOTBALL: The England Monarchs recorded their first victory of the NFL Europe season at the fourth attempt yesterday and thus condemned the Scottish Claymores to their fourth successive loss. Two touchdown receptions by Reggie Jones gave them a 14-10 win in front of 6,246 spectators at the Alexander Stadium, Birmingham, their third new home. As in their previous three games, the Monarchs gave up a touchdown on their opponents' opening drive. The Claymores moved 60 yards impressively, culminating with an eight-yard touchdown reception by Dino Philyaw. They were unable to repeat such fluency as injuries to their quarterback and running backs hampered their tactics. Their only other points came from Gary Parker's field goal between Jones's catches.

Winning start by Army

■ RUGBY UNION: The Army won their first game in defence of the Inter-Services Cup by beating the Royal Navy 36-22 before a raucous crowd at Twickenham on Saturday (Michael Aylwin writes). The Army went ahead in the thirtieth minute with a try by Abernethy in their first serious attack, but the Navy soon replied with a try from Perry after a quickly-taken penalty. A controversial penalty try, awarded for a collapsed five-metre scrum, proved to be the turning point for the Army and that score was soon added to by a brilliant 70-yard effort from Johnson, the Gloucester wing. A try by Dawling just before half-time gave the Army a 24-5 lead and left the Navy with too much to do.

Everton close in on title

■ WOMEN'S FOOTBALL: Everton moved to the brink of the Premier League title yesterday with a goalless draw away to Creighton, despite being reduced to ten players after Cathy Gore was sent off. With only one game remaining, against Millwall Lionesses next Sunday, Everton can only be caught by Arsenal if the Londoners win their three remaining matches and score around 16 goals in the process. Southampton Saints will return to the Premier League next season after winning the southern division title. They had a handsome 4-0 home win over Langford with two goals from Lorraine Haycocks and one apiece by Anna Dinsdale and Lisa Langrish.

BOWLS

Holt dethrones the Kings

JUST one week after breaking into the rarefied world of televised bowls, a confident David Holt hit top form to win one of the big singles titles, the Churchill Insurance England Bowls Players Association championship, at Wellingborough yesterday.

By DAVID RHYS JONES

Potters in October, but yesterday he had to master the idiosyncrasies of a floor that is due to be relaid tomorrow.

He reached the semi-finals with wins over Richard Moses and Gary Smith, but looked to be on his way out when he failed to score a shot against Mervyn King, the world No 3, in the first set and trailed 1-5 in the second.

However, he scored 14 shots

to King's two over the next eight ends to win 0-7, 7-5, 7-2 and set himself up for another encounter with a King — Kevin — who had beaten the giant-killing Stuart Thomas 7-4, 7-1, in the other semi-final.

Thomas had beaten Les Gillett, the International Open champion, 7-0, 4-7, 7-4, and Greg Harlow, the holder, 6-7, 7-5, 7-5.

The final was an anti-climax as Holt, in imperious form, brushed aside King 7-0, 7-2,

SAILING

Toshiba in search for navigator

DENNIS CONNER'S troubled campaign in the Whitbread Round the World Race with Toshiba fell into further disarray this weekend with the resignation of Andrew Cape, the yacht's navigator, (Edward Gorman writes). The abrupt departure of the Lynton-based Australian follows a poor run of performances by Toshiba, one of the pre-race favourites but struggling in seventh place.

Cape, the navigator on Tokyo in the last Whitbread, is known to have been enjoying this race. Paul Standbridge, of Great Britain, who rejoins the boat as skipper for the next leg across the Atlantic, hopes to announce a replacement today. Among possible candidates contacted for the job, he said, was Steve Hayles, navigator on Silk Cut for the first four legs. Hayles, however, is still contracted to Lawrie Smith, the skipper of Silk Cut, and is not available.

Shirley Robertson was the best of the British team at the Hyeres Olympic Classes regatta, holding on to win the Europe fleet, just ahead of Carolijn Brouwer, of Holland. In the Lasers, Ben Ainslie finished second in the 49ers. Tim Robinson and Ian Walker were sixth.

RUGBY LEAGUE: SHEFFIELD STAGE LATE BURST FOR VICTORY AS BRADFORD HANG ON FOR ANOTHER AWAY WIN

Eagles fail to convince

Huddersfield Giants..... 18
Sheffield Eagles..... 48

By PETER WILSON

SHEFFIELD EAGLES' build-up to their big date at Wembley on Saturday is clouded with uncertainty, despite a huge first JJB Super League win.

A highly-impressive second half, which produced 32 points, could not mask their other problems. Waisale Sovatava, the Fijian full back, was sent off in the 42nd minute for a high tackle on Ben Barton, of Huddersfield. His dismissal somehow spurred on Sheffield, but he will now have to face the game's disciplinary committee on Thursday and convince them that this was no act of

malice, but simply a tackle that was more careless than reckless. In addition, Dale Laughton, the prop forward, may also be called upon to plead his innocence after being placed on report by Steve Ganson, the referee, for an incident involving Joe Berry, of Huddersfield.

All in all, it was a mixed day for Sheffield. If the plan was to lure Wigan Warriors, their cup rival opponents, into a false sense of well-being, they may well have achieved some success. They will have to improve in almost every department if the gloomy predictions of an embarrassing, one-sided final are not to be accurate.

They made a nervous start and fell 14-4 behind against another of the teams without a Super League win to their

credit and, although they managed to give their confidence a boost by edging ahead before half time, they did not exactly ooze confidence until a late scoring burst took them out of reach. It all ended in a procession for the Eagles' 12 men, but even the size of the victory will not convince anybody other than their most faithful followers that they have anything more than outside chance against Wigan.

SCORERS: Huddersfield Goals: Steve Arnold (2), Vickers, Johnson, Goss, Weston, Sheffield Eagles: Tress, Carr (2), Crawley, Ch Turner, G. Jackson, Reilly, Senior, Goals: Aston, S. Cropper.

Huddersfield Giants: G. Aston, A. Bell, D. Henshaw, P. Loughlin, B. Barton, C. Wilson, C. Orr, H. Hammon, D. Russell, J. Berry, B. Richards, Vickers, M. Sumner, S. P. Cook, J. Field, G. Scrother, P. Jackson. Sheffield Eagles: V. Sovatava, D. Phelan, M. Taylor, K. Senior, M. Cropper, D. Watson, M. Aston, P. Brough, J. Lawrence, D. Layton, P. Carr, D. Shaw, M. Wood, S. D. Turner, M. Jackson, R. Davie, S. Mayes, R. S. Jackson.

Sharks go close to upset

BRADFORD Bulls, the JJB Super League champions, held on for their third successive away win as Hull Sharks threatened an upset in front of a near-capacity 10,000 crowd yesterday.

After the 26-24 victory, Matthew Elliott, the Bradford coach, said: "I thought we were going to lose it."

Against a Hull side that three possession away at an alarming rate in the first half, Bradford stroled to a 16-6 lead. It was an advantage that Elliott believed his side should have stretched.

"With all the possession we had, we had enough opportunities to have put this game out of Hull's reach," he said. "We didn't, and to Hull's credit, they came back and pushed us to the limit."

With Steve McNamara and

Tevia Vaikona, two former favourites at Hull, having impressive returns, Bradford sprang the opposition defence three times in the opening 40 minutes through Vaikona, Danny Peacock and Matt Calland.

After a stern half-time talk from Peter Walsh, their coach, Hull managed to get their hands on the ball. Inspired by a try from Alan Hunt, they almost turned the game around.

"If we had played like that in the first half, we would have won," Walsh said, "but if you only complete 30 per cent of your plays in 40 minutes against a side like Bradford, you are going to pay and we did."

Chris Chester inspired Halifax Blue Sox to a comfortable 29-16 Yorkshire derby

Morgan hit by attack of nerves

FROM RICHARD EATON IN SOFIA

KELLY MORGAN suggested that she has enough skill and the right attitude to be Britain's most successful singles player for a decade, despite her 11-2, 11-4 loss to Camilla Martin, the defending champion, in the European championships on Saturday.

The Welsh player's height, reach and expanding range of strokes made a good impression throughout the tournament, though she was too nervous to do herself justice in her first big final.

"When I felt the atmosphere, I thought... ooh," Morgan, 22, said. "I found it all a bit nerve-racking."

This was a pity because Martin had been looking far from unbeatable. The world No 4, from Denmark, had a shoulder strain so troublesome that she considered quitting the tournament.

"I like to think that won't happen again," Morgan, who is expected to be favourite at the Commonwealth Games in September, said.

It has been less than a season since National Lottery funding enabled her to return home from Højbjerg, Denmark, where she succeeded Martin as the leading player in her club. She has risen to be world No 15, the highest ranking of a British player since computerised rankings began in 1991.

Simon Archer and Chris Hunt regained the men's doubles title with a 15-3, 15-6 drubbing of Peter Axelsson and Par-Gunnar Jonsson, the No 2 seeds, from Sweden.

Peter Gade, the world No 2 from Denmark, won the men's singles title by beating his compatriot, Kenneth Jonassen, 15-8, 15-4.

HOCKEY: ENGLAND WOMEN MARCH ON BY BEATING UNITED STATES AS MEN WRAP UP HOME NATIONS' CROWN

Smith's double sinks hosts

IN the warm-up for last night's final, Jane Smith maintained her prolific form when she scored both goals as England beat the United States 2-0 in the four nations tournament in Springfield, Massachusetts on Saturday. Finding the target either

side of the interval, Smith's double took her to six goals in the event as England continued their impressive build-up to the World Cup finals in Utrecht next month after earlier victories over India and Canada.

Twelve goals in three matches without conceding any is quite an achievement and, although Canada have not qualified for Holland, they collected the bronze medal at the 1994 finals. India are England's first opponents in the World Cup.

Despite missing five international players, including Smith, Slough swept into the final of the EHA Cup when they defeated Loughborough Students, of the first division side, 5-1. Lucy Cope, Julia

Robertson, Lesley Hobley, Lisa Copeland and Ali Burt scored for the league champions, who remain on course for a domestic treble.

A hat-trick by Denise Marston-Smith and a fourth by Louise Hopkins steered Clifton into their third successive final when they beat High-town, the holders, 4-1. With Slough having already qualified for the European Club championship as league winners, Clifton are next year guaranteed their first appearance at the European Cup Winners' Cup.

In Cardiff, two superb individual efforts in the last two minutes by Emma James, the Wales striker, helped Swansea to a fifth successive league and cup double when they triumphed 6-3 over Newtown in the Welsh Cup final.

ENGLAND'S 5-3 victory over Wales yesterday, coupled with their 6-1 win over Scotland on Friday, enabled them to clinch the home nations' tournament at Milton Keynes. However, they were lucky to draw 3-3 on Saturday with England Lions, whose main function was to make up the numbers and were not really part of the tournament.

Wales put up a gallant fight against England and came back into the match when Organ reduced the home side's lead to 3-2 in the 21st minute. England showed superior firepower, with Giles converting two short corners that put them 5-2 ahead at the interval. In a tightly-fought second half, Hughes-Rowlands converted his second short corner to give Wales a measure of respectability.

By SYDNEY FRISKIN

England Lions started the day with a 3-0 victory over Scotland, who had one of their worst weekends in international hockey. Crutchley, from a short corner, Johnson and Hoskin, from another short corner, scored for Lions. On Saturday, Scotland were beaten 5-1 by Wales, with Markham, Hacker, Edwards, Griffiths-Jones and Organ sharing the spoils.

James Wallis spared England's blushes on Saturday by scoring in the last minute to force the draw with England Lions, who, only a minute earlier, had taken a 3-2 lead with a goal by Barnes from a short corner. Lions had established a 2-0 lead with goals by Mayer in the first minute and Crutchley almost on half-time.

Pearn and Garcia responded for England in the 65th and 66th minutes.

Millfield retained the RAF Careers Youth Cup at under-14 level with a 2-0 win over Repton. The under-16 final was won by St George's College, who defeated Simon Langton Grammar School 4-1. St George's achieved a double by winning the under-18 final, but were taken to penalty strokes by Repton after a 2-2 draw. The penalty-stroke barrage ended in an exciting 6-5 win for St George's.

The county championship will be completed next weekend at Milton Keynes, with the semi-finals and final of the B division on Saturday and the semi-finals and final of the A division the next day. Cheshire will be defending their title.

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MOTOR RACING: McLAREN DRIVER OVERCOMES LATE PROBLEM TO KEEP SCHUMACHER AT BAY

Coulthard moves into cruise control

FROM KEVIN EASON IN IMOLA

IN THE end, it was a drive that defied the odds and Michael Schumacher's ability to turn the fates to his advantage. Just when David Coulthard should have been easing to victory in the San Marino Grand Prix here yesterday, it seemed that his Formula One world championship hopes would be dashed again to allow Schumacher to reap the rewards.

With 14 laps to go, Coulthard's apparently impregnable lead of more than 20 seconds over Schumacher's Ferrari started to shrink dramatically.

Engineers had noticed that the oil temperature in his McLaren-Mercedes was rising rapidly and alerted Ron Dennis, the team manager, who leapt from the pit wall to examine the stream of data pouring from Coulthard's computer link. Mika Hakkinen, Coulthard's teammate, had already fallen victim to a failed gearbox as early as the seventeenth lap and they were worried that Coulthard was about to experience the same fault, depositing victory in Schumacher's lap once again.

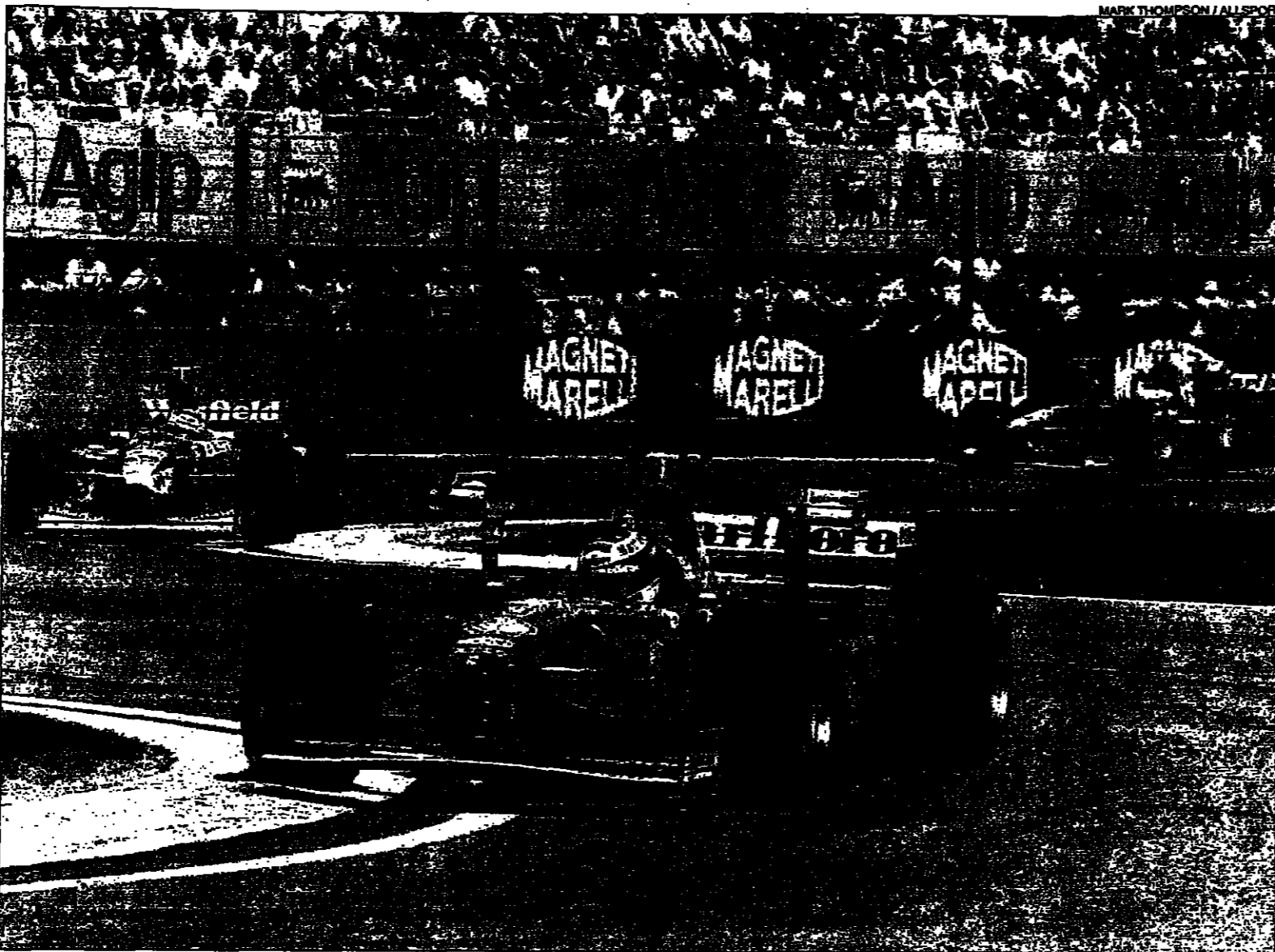
The tension showed on the face of the normally implacable Dennis, who radioed Coulthard to slow down and nurse his car to the chequered flag. From then on, it was a nervous drive as Schumacher reeled in the McLaren. A lap after the warning, the gap had dropped to 17.2sec and Schumacher was carving a further second a lap out of Coulthard's lead.

As Schumacher turned into the pit straight with two laps to go, he could see the McLaren's exhaust pipes ahead and the 120,000 Italian spectators sensed that the master of good fortune was about to prevail again.

Coulthard not only had no idea that he had a problem, he did not want to know that his race had the potential for crushing disappointment. "I knew Mika had stopped, but I didn't ask why because I didn't want to be thinking about it during the race," he said. "The team informed me Mika had stopped, but if I knew there was a problem, I would have spent the entire race listening for funny noises from the engine."

Schumacher had no idea whether Coulthard's dramatic loss of pace was a bluff, perhaps in revenge for Argentina, where the German's vigorous overtaking cost the McLaren driver victory. "It was obvious he was cruising," he said, "but I didn't want to give anything away until the chequered flag, so I just kept driving hard."

If panic was setting in at the McLaren pit, Coulthard at least was calm. "There was



The Ferrari of Michael Schumacher, sporting the new X-wings, leads Villeneuve and Irvine through a corner on the way to second place at Imola

more in hand if I needed it and I had a gap to Michael. I just had to concentrate and not make any mistakes," he said. Which he did, an achievement that impressed Norbert Haug, the Mercedes technical head.

"I was worried because I thought we were going to lose out to Michael again," Haug said, "but that was a really great drive by David. It was controlled and to lead like that

and deal with the criticism he has had recently was fantastic."

From the start, the McLaren's underlined the dominance that they have shown all season, but this time there was no chance for Schumacher to harass Hakkinen and Coulthard. The Scot darted into a lead that he would not relinquish, though behind him Villeneuve

emphasised his determination by moving aggressively past Eddie Irvine. Damon Hill's efforts to improve from seventh on the grid were frustrated when he clipped the Benetton of Alexander Wurz, which had stuttered briefly in front of his Jordan. The Briton was forced to stop for a nose-cone, emerging from the pits in nineteenth place.

Yet Hill, too, seemed to have

added steel to his make-up and started to charge through the field, picking off backmarkers until he had forced his way into seventh place. His speed — at one point midway through the race faster than any car on the track outside the leading four — gave cause for optimism before he was thwarted by an engine problem three laps from the finish.

Wurz, too, had to retire and the Benetton team, promising much this year, saw Giancarlo Fisichella's pursuit of Heinz-Harald Frentzen end in the gravel at the Variante Bassa corner.

Irvine tussled with Villeneuve while in agony from back pain. He has suffered all season and yesterday had a pain-killing injection before the race, though that did little to ease the discomfort as he battled to stay ahead of the Canadian world champion's Williams to secure his second podium finish in succession.

There was little to celebrate for the other Britons. Johnny Herbert's frustrating season continued yesterday with a puncture that his Sauber team thought was serious suspension damage. He jumped out of the car to discover that it had only a flat tyre and he could have raced on.

For the Stewart team, simply finishing a race seems to be a daunting proposition after Jan Magnussen and Rubens Barrichello collided on the first lap. Barrichello lost his tail fin and Magnussen limped on for eight more laps before Stewart's San Marino Grand Prix was over.

IMOLA DETAILS

RESULT: 1, D Coulthard (GB, McLaren) 1hr 34min 24.53sec; 2, M Schumacher (Ger, Ferrari) 4.55sec behind; 3, E Irvine (GB, Benetton) 51.776; 4, J Villeneuve (Can, Williams) 54.550; 5, H-H Frentzen (Ger, Williams) 77.477; 6, J Alonso (Fr, Sauber) 1 lap behind; 7, R Schumacher (Ger, Jordan) 2 laps; 8, E Tunesi (Arg, Minardi) 2; 9, M Salo (Fin, Arrows) 2; 10, D Hill (GB, Jordan) 5; 11, O Panis (Fr, Prost) 6. Did not finish: R Rosset (Br, Tyrrell); T Takagi (Jpn, Tyrrell); J Trulli (It, Prost); S Nakano (Jpn, Minardi); P Diriz (Br, Arrows); M Hakkinen (Fin, McLaren); G Fisichella (It, Benetton); A Wurz (Austria, Benetton); J Herbert (GB, Sauber); J Magnussen (Den, Stewart); R Barrichello (Br, Stewart). Fastest lap: M Schumacher 1:29.345.

2, Ferrari 30; 3, Williams 13; 4, Benetton 8; 5, Sauber 4. QUALIFYING TIMES: 1, Coulthard 1min 25.973sec; 2, Hakkinen 0.102sec behind; 3, M Schumacher 0.404; 4, Irvine 1.196; 5, Wurz 1.300; 6, Villeneuve 1.417; 7, Hill 1.819; 8, Frentzen 1.672; 9, R Schumacher 1.893; 10, Fisichella 1.964; 11, Herbert 2.139; 12, Alonso 2.218; 13, Panis 2.297; 14, Salo 2.625; 15, Takagi 3.100; 16, Trulli 3.811; 17, Barrichello 3.898; 18, Diriz 3.959; 19, Tunesi 4.576; 20, Magnussen 5.044; 21, Nakano 5.282; 22, Rosset 5.539.



Ferrari followers invaded the track after the race yesterday

TENNIS Moyà earns reward for hard labour

FROM JULIAN MUSCAT, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT IN MONTE CARLO

THE final of the Monte Carlo Open was a bridge too far for Cedric Pioline, who comprehensively failed to recover from his draining semi-final victory over Alberto Berasategui the previous day. Pioline, seeded No 10, was as stiff as cardboard yesterday and duly pulped by Carlos Moyà in straight sets.

Sorely absent were the heroics Pioline conjured against Berasategui, who squandered a 5-1 lead and two match points to succumb to the Frenchman. Plain sore were the right shoulder, elbow and legs that fashioned the triumph.

Icepacks may have dulled Pioline's pain, but they also numbed his mind. He was out-thought, outmanoeuvred and eventually overwhelmed by Moyà, who has recaptured the spirit that swept him to a career-best No 3 world ranking in September last year.

Moyà's return to form capped a topsy-turvy six months. His appearance in the Australian Open final last year heralded him as a rarity, a Spaniard capable of performing well away from clay. Moyà, 21, closed the year by reaching the semi-finals of the ATP Tour world championships, yet his form slumped at the start of 1998.

His best effort, a low-key quarter-final place in Dubai, was well short of expectations and it required a return to clay to repair his fragile confidence. Two semi-final appearances in Estoril and Barcelona proved to be the springboard to greater heights.

"I wasn't playing that well early in the year," Moyà, seeded No 14, said, "but I had worked hard on my fitness in December. Last year, I realised that fitness was a very important part of winning tournaments. I had a tough draw, but I felt after beating [Thomas] Muster in the first round that I would do well."

Moyà's 6-3, 6-0, 7-5 triumph

gave him his most prestigious career title, which he annexed for the loss of a single set, to Richard Krajicek, in the semi-finals. He was demonstrably the fresher man yesterday. If it is too early to draw firm conclusions about Moyà's prospects for the French Open, the winner's cheque of £225,000 is hardly likely to make him despondent.

Though Pioline has become a model of consistency on all surfaces, his record in finals is not one to crow about. He has triumphed in two of 14 he has contested and his stamina appears to be suspect, even if he could be largely excused this latest



Moyà: champion show

failure. "Playing six matches in seven days is a lot and my semi-final was exhausting," Pioline said.

One curious anomaly in the Frenchman's otherwise notable career has been his lack of progress at the French Open. His performance in Monte Carlo should ensure that he arrives at Roland Garros with a seeded berth.

Moyà and Pioline are expected to vault above Tim Henman, who will drop to No 17 when the world rankings are revised this morning. Henman and Greg Rusedski are engaged in the BMW Open, which starts in Munich today. Rusedski's ranking is expected to stay No 5.

Courier fights back

MICHAEL CHANG, the champion, and Jim Courier, the No 3 seed, reached the final of the US men's clay court championship in Orlando, Florida, on Saturday. Chang, the top seed, seized the momentum early against Mikael Tillström, of Sweden, before cruising to a

6-3 6-4 victory. Courier had a tougher time against Andrei Pavel, of Romania, recovering from losing the first set 6-4 to win the next two 6-3, 6-2. Chang had an 11-10 lead in matches against Courier before they met in the final last night.

APRIL 27 1998
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Advertisement for BOSS HUGO BOSS watches. Features a large image of a watch with a black dial and leather strap. Text includes: 'FOR YOUR NEAREST BOSS Hugo Boss Watch STOCKIST TELEPHONE 01428 656822 Email: BOSS_Hugo_Boss@swico.co.uk'

Advertisement for a boxing match between Joe Calzaghe and Juan Carlos Gimenez. Section header: 'BOXING Drum-beating begins for best-of-British bout'. Text includes: 'BRITISH super-middleweights are well placed to dominate the division. By next April, Joe Calzaghe and Richie Woodhall could become the first two Britons to meet in a contest for an undisputed world title. It was a bout that was being talked about after Calzaghe became the first man to stop Juan Carlos Gimenez, of Paraguay, at Cardiff on Saturday. The Welshman, who could become as popular as Naseem Hamed in the United States, might have three titles in his hands by the end of the year, adding the International Boxing Federation (IBF) and World Boxing Association versions to the World Boxing Organisation crown that he holds at present. As Woodhall, the World Boxing Council champion is, like Calzaghe, managed by Frank Warren, the all-British

Advertisement for a motorcycle race. Section header: 'MOTOR SPORT Leslie gives Nissan new hope'. Text includes: 'DAVID LESLIE gave the Nissan team its first Auto Trader RAC British Touring Car championship victory for five years at Silverstone yesterday. Leslie, from Scotland, won the shorter of the day's two races in his Primera and there was a surprise win for Will Hoy, the 1991 champion, in the feature race. It was Hoy's first victory since 1995 and also Ford's first for three years. It was a bad day for Alain Menu, the reigning champion, who crashed his Renault out of both events. Jason Plato, Menu's team-mate, now leads the title race and Renault are still ahead in the manufacturer's championship. The sprint race started to go Leslie's way when he made the best of the damp conditions to take an early lead from James Thompson, who had been on pole position. Thompson made a comparatively poor start, but managed to hold off Plato to finish second. Steve Hislop snatched a dramatic last-lap victory over Niall Mackenzie, his Yamaha team-mate, in the fourth round of the Motor Cycle News British championship at Oulton Park. The two riders had duelled furiously throughout the 15-lap race. Hislop finally diving ahead at Lodge Corner to claim his first Supertbike victory since 1995. Mackenzie was unhappy with Hislop's last-corner manoeuvre and insisted: "It was not a move I would have made."

Advertisement for BOSS HUGO BOSS watches. Features a large image of a watch with a black dial and leather strap. Text includes: 'FOR YOUR NEAREST BOSS Hugo Boss Watch STOCKIST TELEPHONE 01428 656822 Email: BOSS_Hugo_Boss@swico.co.uk'

FA Carling Premiership: Newcastle undermined by former players as Bolton grab lifeline

Ginola excels but Gross refuses to go overboard

NEWCASTLE United old boys ran the show for Tottenham Hotspur at White Hart Lane on Saturday. Les Ferdinand scored and had a strong appeal for a penalty turned down. Ruel Fox ran with pace, skill and purpose. And then there was the irrepressible David Ginola. Twisting, turning and tormenting the Newcastle defence — which could do little or nothing with him — Ginola popped up on the right, slalomed through the middle and was instrumental in both goals.



TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR 2 NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

By Brian Glanville

It was strange afterwards to find Christian Gross, the Tottenham coach, damning Ginola with faint praise. "He had a good performance, but he can still do it better. Look: he has the ability to be world-class, but he isn't world-class."

He was certainly a different class from almost every other player on the field, although Gross chose to single out Sol Campbell and Ferdinand.

Ginola engineered the first goal in the 31st minute after being found by Ferdinand. He turned and twisted before crossing with his left foot from the right wing and Jürgen Klinsmann soared above Watson on the far post to head in.

Gross confirmed that there is a clause in Klinsmann's contract to say that he must always play. "I let him start today. I was convinced that he was playing good."

"He worked very hard and he deserved his goal. I thought there would be a reaction after the Barnsley game [when Klinsmann

was substituted] and he wasn't in the German team against Nigeria on Wednesday."

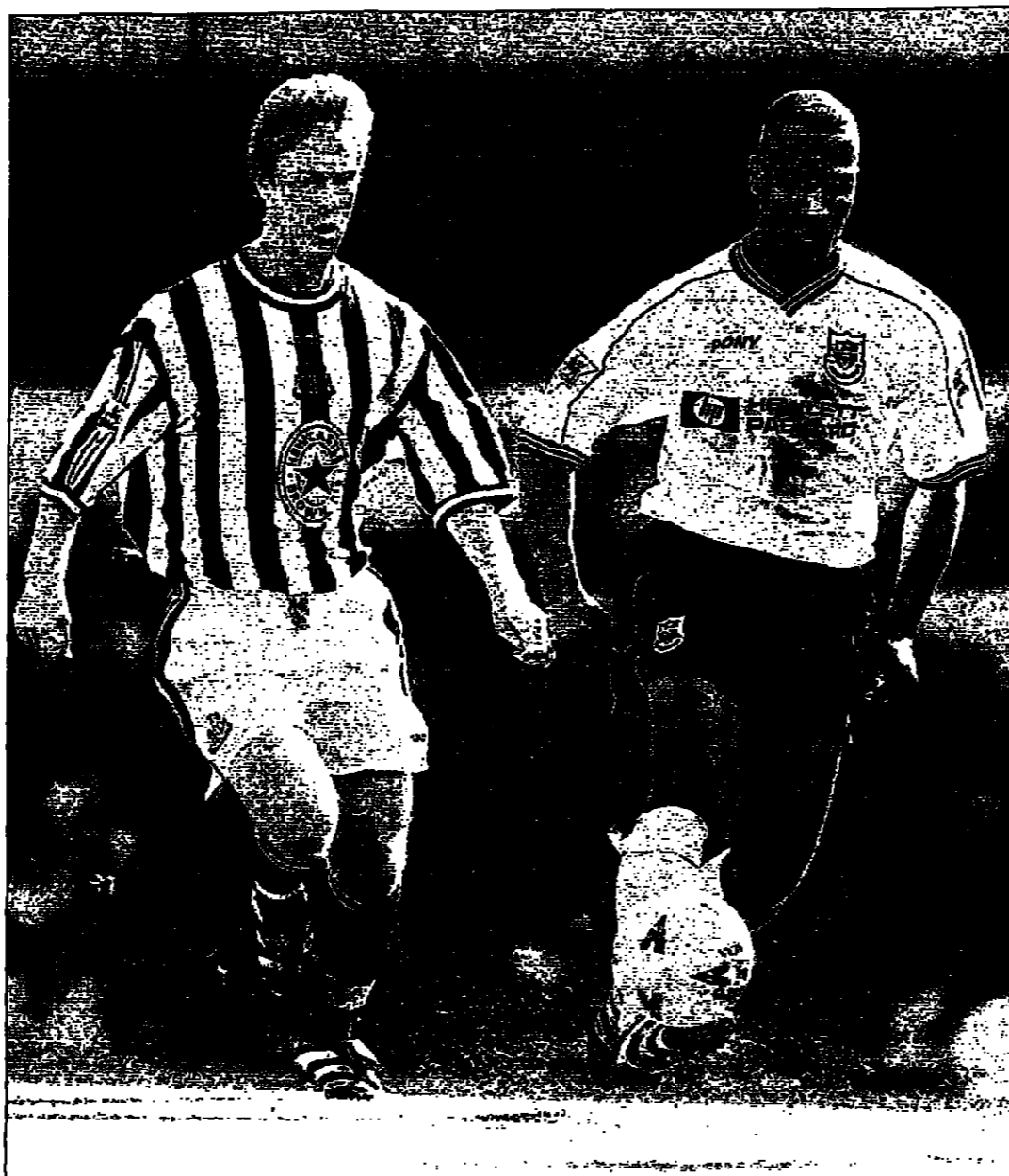
It might have seemed politic to substitute Klinsmann again at half-time with Chris Armstrong as Gross did at Barnsley, since the German contributed little of consequence in the second half, when he looked tired.

The second Tottenham goal came from Ginola's right-wing corner after 72 minutes. Ferdinand rose high above Dabizas on the left-hand post and Given was beaten once more. Newcastle had only one significant attempt on goal and that came as late as the 77th minute. Gary Speed, largely ineffective in midfield, crossed accurately but Vega blocked Shearer's header on the line.

Newcastle were curiously dull. As Kenny Dalglish, their manager, admitted, relegation is still a possibility and, as he said, they need a win. They had no one in midfield to match Ginola, no creative mind to keep them on the move. Shearer must have wished that he was playing for England against Portugal again.

As Dalglish said, no season has "ebbed away" when a team has reached the FA Cup Final, but given the present abyss between Newcastle and Arsenal, perhaps the best Newcastle can do is rely on history. After all, they have a 100 per cent record in the final against Arsenal, beating them in 1932 and 1952.

Dalglish denied suggestions that his team lacked energy, which seemed fair enough since what they chiefly seemed to lack was quality. "We may not have played as well as we did last week at Manchester United," he said. "Today, it was one



Ferdinand, scorer of the second Tottenham goal, leaves Barton trailing in his wake

of those off-days for passing. You get what you deserve. But it doesn't affect your philosophy. We'll stick to that: it's stood me in good stead. And that's to play football."

On this occasion, it was Tottenham who played the football and Ginola who played it better than anyone. He has long since written off his World Cup chance. He has not played for his country since before the last finals, when Aimé Jacquet, the coach, blamed him and Eric Cantona for France's failure to qualify. He will work as a television commentator this summer.

Table with 5 columns: GOING... GOING... THE BOTTOM OF THE PREMIERSHIP, P, W, D, L, Pts. Rows include Newcastle, Tottenham, Everton, Bolton, and Crystal Palace.

Goalline luck evens itself out for Bolton

JOHN Gregory, the Aston Villa manager, believes that cameras must be introduced to help officials on close goalline decisions. An incident in the 51st minute on Saturday supports his point. Replays showed that Dwight Yorke assisted a header by Ian Taylor over the line, but the "goal" was not awarded.



ASTON VILLA 1 BOLTON WANDERERS 3

By Richard Hobson

Although the beneficiaries at Villa Park they might yet suffer relegation because a perfectly good goal of their own was ruled out in similar circumstances earlier in the season and, if the incident on September 1 seemed to be an unfortunate triviality by the morning of September 2, then it has assumed a fateful significance since the opposition in that 0-0 draw at the Reebok Stadium just happened to be Everton.

Bolton would be out of the bottom three, a point ahead of Everton this morning had the decision gone their way. Instead, they sit two points behind and while their final fixtures against Crystal Palace and Chelsea might appear slightly easier than Everton's contests with Arsenal and Coventry City, then it can only be a marginal call.

Nathan Blake spoke openly after his late headed goal confirmed a second away win of the season — so openly, indeed, that Colin Todd will think twice before employing him as a locum at future press conferences. The manager will be particularly interested in the identity of those players Blake suggested will leave should Bolton go down.

Gerry Taggart has declared already his intention to move on a free transfer. He will have plenty of offers. Taggart's appearance is not that of a man one would choose to cross in a dark alley. His looks betray his occupation as a central defender. In his first start for six months, he instilled resilience into the back three and dominated in the air. "He is the commanding figure we have

missed," Blake said. "We will struggle to replace him unless we spend a good couple of million."

After successive defeats against Derby County and Leeds United, Bolton moved the ball upfield far more quickly. They fed Blake and Bob Taylor behind the wing backs and their cause was helped when injuries to Staunton and Southgate, playing with heavy strapping around an ankle these days, forced Villa to reorganise.

They also encountered Mark Bosnich on a decidedly off day. In the eighteenth minute, a shot by Cox followed a tortuous route via post and the diving goalkeeper into the net. Four minutes before half-time, Bob Taylor intercepted a reckless pass by Yorke, brushed past Scimeca's flimsy challenge and beat Bosnich at the near post.

Branagan made no such errors. He palmed away firm attempts by Hendrie and Milosevic, laid another by Southgate and could do little about Ian Taylor's rasping shot after 57 minutes. Twelve minutes later, Joachim's shot hit a post and rebounded into the arms of the goalkeeper.

Gregory suggested that Villa lack a ruthless streak. Nobody can quibble with a return of seven wins in nine Premiership games since he replaced Brian Little, except that the defeats have been inflicted by Barnsley and Bolton. "I just hope those two go down," he said. The Interotto Cup beckons.

Whether Bolton? "We felt we were ready for the Premiership at the start of the season, but we were not as advanced as we thought," Blake said. "Maybe, like Barnsley, we did not get to grips with it until Christmas. We are more optimistic now."

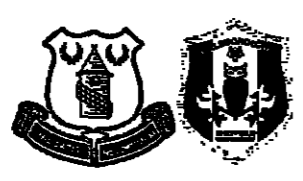
ASTON VILLA (3-5-2): M Bosnich — U Ekechi, G Southgate (sub: S Grayson, 46min), S Staunton (sub: R Scimeca, 32), J Joachim, I Taylor, M Dwyer, L Hendrie, A Wright — S Milosevic (sub: S Collymore, 59), D Yorke

BOLTON WANDERERS (3-5-2): K Branagan — M Fish (sub: C Facerchugh, 53), G Branagan, M Taggart — N Cox, P Francis (sub: M Johnson, 17), S Sheridan, A Thompson, J Phillips — R Taylor (sub: G Gielis, 80), N Blake

Referee: D Elbery.

Di Canio punishes Everton

IF EVERTON'S players did not fully appreciate the danger to their FA Carling Premiership status before this match, they must have had an unpleasant surprise when the import of Saturday's other results sank in. With two games left, they are now only one place above the relegation positions and, although they have a two-point advantage over Bolton Wanderers, the club immediately below them, that could easily become a one-point deficit next weekend.



EVERTON 1 SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY 3

By Nick Szczepanik

Bolton entertain Crystal Palace on Saturday. Everton face the much more daunting prospect of a trip to Highbury the next day and midweek results may mean that they will be attempting to deny the champions-elect their title. If anything, it gets worse: while Everton receive Coventry City in their final game, Bolton visit Chelsea only three days before the Londoners' Cup Winners' Cup final.

Paolo Di Canio, a danger throughout, crossed the experimental yellow ball for the unmarked Mark Pembroke to head in after only three minutes; then Pembroke, unchallenged, seized on a sloppy clearance from Bilic, beating Myhrne from 20 yards thanks to a deflection.

In a much more even second half, Everton pulled a goal back when Ferguson headed in Bilic's long forward ball, but left gaps at the back in the process and, even after the dismissal of Booth for a second bookable offence, it was surprising that the visitors' third only arrived in the last minute. Di Canio rounding Myhrne.

was a distant memory and their team was ravaged by suspension and injury, they still began with an urgency that Everton could not match until they were two goals down.

"I can't fault us on effort and trying to retrieve the situation," Kendall said. "I can fault the organisation or the thought. There were a lot of young

players out there who needed guidance and there wasn't any out there today."

Whose fault is that? Kendall rightly paid tribute to Di Canio, who was outstanding, fully deserving the applause of those Everton supporters who stayed behind to acknowledge an extraordinary display. However, the praise only served to emphasise that while Wednesday were successfully pursuing the Italian last summer, Everton managed only to come up with Tony Thomas, John Oster and Gareth Farrelly. Worthy as they might be, none is in Di Canio's league — which might be literally as well as metaphorically true within a fortnight.

"Everybody's feeling a little low, but not feeling down," Kendall said. Not yet, anyway.

EVERTON (3-4-2-1): T Myhrne — C Short (sub: J O'Shea, 45min), S Bilic, C Tier (sub: D Watson, 85) — G Hill (sub: P Bognoro, 46), D Hutchison, G McCann, M Sini — N Eastwood — M Madsen, D Ferguson

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (3-4-2-1): K Prossman, E Thomas, D Walker, A Hinchcliffe — P Armeron — G Worthington, J Marjono (sub: L Brooker, 54), G Hinks, M Pennington — A Booth, P Di Canio

Referee: G Barber

Derby's 15 minutes of infamy

POSTERS adorning the walls of Pride Park yesterday advertised the club's "Silly End-of-Season Sale" on May 9. "It's come bloody early this year," a disgruntled home supporter lamented at half-time. Derby County were 4-0 down to Leicester City, the goals compressed into a frantic 15-minute opening spell.



DERBY COUNTY 0 LEICESTER CITY 4

By Russell Kempson

At least Mr Angry stayed on to watch the second half, unlike some fellow sufferers. After Marshall had risen high to nod in — the fourth header to find its way past Poom in swift succession — a number of disbelieving Derby followers headed for the exits.

"It was an extraordinary start," Martin O'Neill, the Leicester manager, said. "All we wanted to do was to play it tight and not do what we did at Everton last week, when we conceded an early goal. We were still on the bus when they scored. This time, I was as dumbfounded as everyone. We played brilliantly."

a resounding victory, yet Leicester were brilliant... for the first 15 minutes. From then on, they needed to be no more than competent... and they were. As the second half drifted predictably in Derby's favour, Leicester sat back, absorbed sporadic pressure and comfortably climbed three places to ninth in the FA Carling Premiership.

Qualification for the Uefa Cup next season is not beyond them, if they win their closing games against Newcastle United, Barnsley and West Ham United. "We've got over the

first hurdle," Marshall said. "Only three more to go."

Fleet-footed and vibrant as Leicester were early on, Derby were awful. A recent record of only one win in six matches, including four defeats, did not augur well and so it proved. They were shambolic defensively as their players were twisted and turned every which way by Leicester's marvellous momentum. "I'm used to players kicking me all over the field, but I couldn't believe how much time and space I was allowed," Heskey, the Leicester striker, said.

Jim Smith, the Derby manager, felt that the 3-1 defeat against Crystal Palace at Selhurst Park the previous weekend was bad enough. "I don't remember being more disappointed with a Derby performance," he said in his match programme notes. He was yesterday.

"It was horrendous," he said. "I looked at the clock, it read 4.15 and we were 4-0 down. We knew there would

be a problem in the air and, to be fair, their crosses into the box were brilliant, but our marking was missing. It was terrible."

The carnage began after 95sec. Savage released Guppy along the right flank and his centre was guided in by Heskey, with barely a challenge in sight. Sixteen seconds after the restart, Marshall fed a pass through, Heskey supplied a splendid cross and Izzet, not the tallest of midfield players, dived forward to head in.

Five minutes later, Heskey headed his ninth goal of the season from a Cuggy free kick and, seven minutes further on, Marshall made it four with another header. The Silly Sale was well under way.

DERBY COUNTY (4-3-3): M Poom — J Laurson, G Powell, C Duff, C Powell (sub: D Burton, 76min) — R van der Laan (sub: R Taylor, 46), I Caraway, L Robinson — P Wainchopp, F Baiano (sub: M Siles, 46), D Stanbury

LEICESTER CITY (3-5-2): K Keller — P Karamis, M Elliott, S Walsh (sub: A Connolly, 73) — R Savage, T Zapanos (sub: R Fenton, 82), N Lennon, M Izzet, S Garry (sub: P Utomah, 78) — I Marshall, E Hopy (sub: G Willard)

Referee: G Willard

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Hodgson lifts the tedium

ON SATURDAY, as the FA Carling Premiership lurched another step nearer its natural conclusion, the drama appeared to be everywhere: hat Ewood Park, Blackburn Rovers edged closer to a Uefa Cup place, Wimbledon edged further away from relegation, but a tame, almost lifeless, encounter barely generated a ripple on the passionometer.



BLACKBURN ROVERS 0 WIMBLEDON 0

By Russell Kempson

Even Graham Poll, one of the reticent fraternity's most enthusiastic card-wavers, was apparently engulfed by the tedium. Only once did he flourish yellow — for Robert's second-half foul on Gallacher — as the players more than an errant offside decision.

He hardly mattered, anyway, with Blackburn's European cause helped by defeats for West Ham United and Aston Villa and Wimbledon's fears eased by defeats for Newcastle United, Everton and Barnsley. Rarely can so much have been gained from the inadequacies of others.

He also reacted spikily when it was later suggested that Rovers' performance had been poor. "It wasn't poor, that's for sure," he said, before listing a catalogue of mitigating circumstances. They included the absence of Hendry, Wilcox, McKinlay and Plicroft because of suspension and the enforced early return of Filan, the goalkeeper, who had not played since sustaining a broken arm in August.

"Don't forget Wimbledon are a difficult team to play against," he said. "We were playing a team who've conceded only five goals in six games and in five of those games they've kept clean sheets. So don't underestimate Wimbledon."

Those five goals were conceded in one mighty lump the previous weekend when Arsenal, the champions-elect, obliterated their London rivals at Highbury. That Wimbledon, also depleted in personnel, had regained a sense of order so swiftly says much for the organisational and motivational skills of Joe Kinnear, their manager.

Cort, 20, 6ft 4in, and Euell, 21, 5ft 11in, formed a lanky, youthful frontline for Wimbledon but squandered the few chances that came their way. "They're just kids," Kinnear said. "They try hard but they're still learning."

BLACKBURN ROVERS (4-4-2): J Filan — P Perry, D Stanbury, S Thatcher — S Ripley, T Stanwood, M Holmes (sub: P Fair, 87), N Ardley, A Roberts, M Kennedy — C Cort, J Small (sub: E Ekechi, 83)

Referee: G Poll

Wenger

With level of... mess team...

مركز من الأمل

FA Carling Premiership: Barnsley left on brink as double Dutch strike brings title within reach

Wenger savours special Arsenal vintage



BARNSELY 0
ARSENAL 2

By Mark Hodgkinson

THE timing was impeccable, which is only customary these days when it involves Arsenal. Arsène Wenger, their manager, picked his way courteously through journalists in the press room at Oakwell. On a television set perched just a few feet above him, Frank McLintock, the captain of Arsenal's exalted team of the early Seventies, was conducting a eulogy to Wenger's side. For a few seconds, no one could find the remote control. In the cramped room, Arsenal were suddenly everywhere: in front, behind, above, past, present and, most likely, future.

When Barnsley secured promotion to the FA Carling Premiership a year ago to the day, it was their dream to share a pitch with dynasties such as Arsenal. They



Bergkamp's brilliant goal gives Arsenal the lead at Oakwell and underlines the gulf in class between sides separated by the length of the Premiership table

TITLE RUN-IN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	34	21	9	4	63	28	68
Man Utd	35	20	8	7	65	28	68

ARSENAL: Wednesday, Derby County (H), May 3; Everton (H), May 8; Liverpool (A), May 10; Aston Villa (A).

MANCHESTER UNITED: Today, Crystal Palace (A), May 4; Leeds (H), May 10; Barnsley (A).

occupied the same space on Saturday, but they were incorporated. Their big hearts and big lungs kept the scoreline respectable, but they were outclassed all the same.

The Arsenal tradition has been to place opponents in a metaphorical headlock before breaking free to sneak an infamous 1-0 win. In short, they bore the game to death and laugh all the way back to Highbury. Wenger, a coach with a draughtsman's eye for detail, has maintained the shellac-coated defence but added a touch of rooco in players such as Bergkamp and Overmars.

They both scored and it was appropriate, because they exemplified the contrast between the teams; between the brilliant and the mediocre, the gifted and the also-rans. The pair are typical of many superlative players. They can appear uninterested, lost in reverie, for long periods and suddenly jolt into life, the ball heading undeviatingly into the net.

Barnsley started well and re-

pelled the visitors for 25 minutes, which almost ranks as a moral victory when Arsenal are in such blistering form. Bergkamp was lingering a few yards outside the penalty area when he was forced into the game by Petit. De Zeeuw and Eaden were within a yard of him, but they might as well have been in the car park. Bergkamp swivelled, accelerated like a Ferrari and two souped-up Minis and the ball was in the net. Game over, or as good as.

Desperate for points for survival, Barnsley maintained an impressive workrate. Redfern, as ever,

conducted the toil, but he received negligible support from Tinkler and Bullock. Eforoff was slow and cumbersome and, even with Ward alongside him after half-time, this heavyweight attack was swatted like pesky flies by Adams and Keown.

Arsenal threatened to increase their lead several times, but 15 minutes before the end it was another Ferrari versus Mini road race as Overmars zipped through the Barnsley rearguard. The ball evaded the right hand of a diving Watson and nestled, with a certain inevitability, in the net. The

Arsenal back-room team — not a group prone to showing emotion — leapt from the dugout as if their bench had been wired to the mains. The goal had secured the win; the win had, surely now, secured the championship.

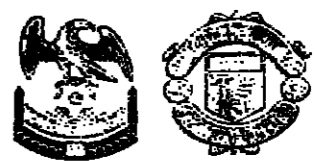
Barnsley, in order to survive, have to win their two remaining games, against Leicester City and Manchester United, and hope that others lose. If they are defeated at Filbert Street on Saturday, they will be relegated. "It is a tall order," Danny Wilson, their manager, said, "but we are still in there fighting. We haven't given up yet."

He was keen to praise Arsenal. "They are a class act, simple as that," he said. "They controlled the game, in all honesty, and played at their own pace. They are going to take some stopping now."

Wenger had recovered his composure and was reflective, as if he saw the impropriety of jiggling at another club's wake. "The Barnsley players gave everything today and you could not reproach any of them," he said. "It is a shame that they may now be relegated, because it has not given them enough time to learn from their mistakes."

If he has mastered the peculiarities and complexities of English football, he has also learnt the value of a soundbite. "He scores only bestsellers," he responded when asked about Bergkamp's goal. He smiled, he knew the line was awful, really, comically awful — just what was required. Clever man, clever team.

BARNSELY (3-4-2-1): D Watson — A de Zeeuw, A Moses, S Jones — N Eaden, N Redfern, E Tinkler (sub: J Bosanovic, Eforoff), D Eamonn, M Bullock, C Henshale (sub: A Ward, 49) — J A Fyfe (sub: J Handley, 75).
ARSENAL (4-4-2): D Seaman — L Dixon, M Jensen, A Adams, N Wretfordham — D Pugh, P Veira, E Peltz, M Overmars — D Bergkamp, N Anelka (sub: C Weir, 75).
Referee: M Piley.



CRYSTAL PALACE
v
MANCHESTER UNITED
Today, 8.0



Oliver Holt

Manchester United will try to stop the rot at Selhurst Park tonight, knowing that the fabric of their championship challenge appears to have been irrevocably undermined already. Things have reached such a pass that, if they lose tonight against opponents who are still fighting desperately against relegation, Arsenal will need only to beat Everton at home on Wednesday night to rip the championship from their grasp.

Palace, of course, hold all sorts of unhappy memories for United, who have not beaten them at Selhurst Park for five years and who will always associate their ground with Eric Cantona's kung-fu attack on a home supporter that resulted in his prolonged suspension from the game and the loss of some of the fire that burned within him.

To add to that inauspicious omen, Palace finally recorded their first home win of the season when they beat Derby County. Emboldened, they may now fancy their chances of doubling their tally.

They certainly have nothing to lose. Rooted to the bottom of the FA Carling Premiership, six points adrift of Barnsley, anything other than a win tonight will effectively ensure that Attilio Lombardo and his embattled team beneath a season of Nationwide League first division football to the incoming Terry Venables and whatever players he can entice back to Selhurst Park.

United will not have given up hope of catching Arsenal just yet and a win for them would bring them to within a point of the league leaders and exert some more pressure on them. Even shorn of confidence though they are, Alex Ferguson and his team will want to prolong the agony.

CRYSTAL PALACE (probable 4-4-2): A Miller — J Smith, V Verma, M Edwards, D Gordon — N Shappery, S Rodgers, T Brin, S Curcio — M Jensen, M Padozino.
MANCHESTER UNITED (probable 4-4-2): P Schmeichel — G Neville, G Pallister, D May, D Irwin — D Beckham, N Butt, P Scholes, R Gigg — S Thornhill, A Cole.
Referee: P Jones.

TELEVISION: Today: Live on Sky Sports 1, from 7pm.
PREDICTION: United to win.

Spirit level puts Evans on less than even keel

THE Anfield refrain claiming 'You'll never walk alone' must be taking on a distinctly hollow ring for Roy Evans, whose solitary march along the plank will surely have been hastened by this pathetic surrender. The Liverpool hierarchy is understood to want to retain the manager's services for next season. Aftable man and committed coach that he is, though, Evans appears no nearer to working out his team's fundamental problems than ever.

Fourth in a two-horse race last year, as they threw away their championship challenge, again they are drifting aimlessly towards the end of another season of unfulfilment. Yet more rebuilding awaits — an entire new defence would be a start — but no amount of money can buy the spirit that Liverpool so badly lacked on Saturday and one increasingly wonders whether, under Evans, they will ever find it.

Too soft, too nice — even Ince appears to lose his venom at club level — this is a team that reflects its manager and that is a shame, because no one doubts the talent. Drawing 1-1, and that fortuitously after a one-sided first half, Liverpool appeared to have taken a grip on the game for the first 15 minutes after the interval. That one rallying spell, however, only highlighted the extent of their subsequent collapse and Evans, honest as ever, did not try to deny his team's unforfeitable failing.

"It was a game we could have got something out of, but there were not enough guts," he said with undisguised anger before trudging disconsolately to the coach. "It hurts me and I just hope it hurts the players as much. I won't accept a performance like that. We threw in the towel. "I could come out with a million and one excuses about injuries and last week's international demands, but in the bottom line is that when it came to the crunch we couldn't handle it. The fans have every



CHELSEA 4
LIVERPOOL 1

By Matt Dickinson

right to be aggrieved. I will not have the kind of attitude we showed in the last half-hour. "I will get different players if I have to, players who will take the responsibility to defend as well as physically. We have to be tougher than we were out there."

With high-calibre centre backs now costing £10 million, it could be an expensive summer. The rearguard that began on Saturday was a quartet of internationals, yet their mistakes by the end were almost laughable. Matteo, one



Hughes: trademark volley

of the players under Glenn Hoddle's consideration for the World Cup, looked particularly abject and Jones is a shadow of the player who was once an England full back.

Chelsea should have finished the game off by half-time, but, remarkably, had only a Mark Hughes header to show for their efforts. Even more strangely, Liverpool had equalised, Riedle finishing from close range after Murphy's shot had been saved by Kharine.

The visitors, whose passing had been so ragged in the opening period, showed a semblance of order immediately after the break, but it takes some rank bad defending for Clarke to get on the scoresheet and even the Chelsea defender accepted that he was "noticeably unmarked" as he grabbed his first goal in six years in the 67th minute.

Thereafter, it was as comprehensive as Chelsea could be bothered to make it. Flo scoring the third as he held off Matteo, and Hughes, again unmarked, rounding things off with one of his trademark acrobatic volleys.

It was an impressive victory by Chelsea, albeit one over dishevelled opponents, but one that came at a considerable cost. Zola hobbled off after 30 minutes holding his head in one hand and clutching his damaged groin in the other.

The Italy forward, who has been playing in discomfort for some weeks, had left the ground before the end of the game and is likely to head back to his home country for treatment. He will undergo more tests today, but his place in the Cup Winners' Cup final next month, and even the World Cup this summer, is in doubt.

Redknapp suffers familiar problem

WHY is it, when you point a camera or a tape recorder at somebody involved in sport, that they begin to talk a different language? It used to be merely a football problem, transforming working-class lads into automata, repeating the same meaningless drivel to anyone within range. But the problem is spreading. Somebody pointed a camera at Dennis Taylor on Saturday night and the former world snooker champion said: "You have to take each frame as it comes." So, snooker has succumbed too. Poor Dennis, you almost felt sorry for him.

And you could feel sympathy, too, for Harry Redknapp that afternoon. He stopped taking each game as it comes years ago, preferring instead to talk good, honest sense, but faced with West Ham United's heaviest home defeat of the season and an unwelcome press conference, his manager could only say: "These things happen. You aren't going to win every game."

"I thought it was going to be difficult today and it was. They are a good team. Normally, you score two goals at home and you win, or at least draw. You don't expect to lose, but everybody has those days..." And so on and so forth, before bolting downstairs to the safety of the dressing rooms at a speed that Linford Christie would have admired.

Believe not a word of it. West Ham had just conceded four goals at home against Southampton — not Manchester United, or Arsenal — and Redknapp was furious. Had he said what he thought... well, it would not have been printable anyway.

Yes, Matt Le Tissier scored a brilliant goal, the game's first, volleying a Dodd free kick against a post and then volleying the rebound into the opposite corner, and, yes, he was involved in two others, but he was not at his best, his magic mixed with some surreal stoppiness. Had he been, perhaps Redknapp would have been more candid, but the game was won by Carlton Palmer.



WEST HAM UNITED 2
SOUTHAMPTON 4

By Peter Robinson

No offence to Palmer, by the way, he was outstanding, scoring the third Southampton goal — which began with his tackle on Berkovic, included Le Tissier's perfect lay-up and ended with a smart, low shot from 20 yards — after setting up the second — a gorgeous, hanging, far-post cross that Ostenstad headed in. He was also involved in a fine move for the fourth, which ended with an Ostenstad drag-back and shot. But it is not the same as being beaten by a genius.

Reading relegated 32

West Ham did score twice. Sinclair making it 1-1 shortly after Le Tissier's effort, Lomas making it 3-2 with a header, but they missed Unsworth at the back and, especially, Hartson up front. It must worry Redknapp that he cannot call on the suspended Welshman for the rest of the season, because he could have been the difference between West Ham securing six points from their remaining matches — thus qualifying, probably, for the Uefa Cup — or not.

Instead, Redknapp must make do against Liverpool, Crystal Palace and Leicester City. He won't need Taylor to tell him that there are no easy frames.
WEST HAM UNITED (3-5-2): S Lomas — S Potts (sub: P Nelson, 70min), R Ferdinand, I Pearce — A Ince, F Lampson, E Berkovic, S Lomas, S Lomas — S Abou, J Sinclair.
SOUTHAMPTON (4-3-1-2): P Jones — J Dodd, K Montoya, C Lundquist, F Benati — C Palmer, K Gibbons, M Oakley — M Le Tissier — D Hirst (sub: S Basham, 77), E Ostenstad.
Referee: G Galagher.

Sensational Huckerby exposes defensive flaws

SIX goals, six bookings, 36,000 spectators mainly delirious with excitement, countless thrills and spills and two beaming managers, concurring through gritted Scottish teeth about the fabled byzantine nature of the English game, see goals, see entertainment! George Graham purred. Honest, he did. (Translation: Roll up, roll up and see me flay my defenders alive once I've finished with this PR nonsense.)

But whatever way you add it up, however much there was to admire in Darren Huckerby's hat-trick or the two-goal riposte from Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink that, together with Harry Kewell's final equaliser, ensured well-matched opponents gained a deserved point apiece on Saturday, the fact remains that this match exposed the flaws in the English game as much as it did its virtues.

Probably in no other country could an end-of-season game on which so little rested have produced such ferocious commitment, such high-tempo endeavour... or such chronic defending, or so many high balls launched in hope and met with trepidation.

"What more could you want from a game?" both managers asked. Well, defenders attempting to tackle from an upright position rather than hurrying themselves at man and ball — often in that order — for one, and staying goal-side of the players they are supposed to be marking for another. "English defending is abysmal and deteriorating quickly," Graham, the Leeds manager, was forced to concede. But what the heck, if the quality was low, the excitement was undeniable.

Green set the tone when he dallied over Harte's hopeful punt. He who hesitates is 1-0 down when Hasselbaink is poaching. The Dutchman's second goal, from a free kick, was his 22nd of the season, a tally surpassed only once by a Leeds player — Lee Chapman — in the last quarter of a century, and came courtesy of a Coventry wall suggesting all



LEEDS UNITED 3
COVENTRY CITY 3

By Keith Pike

the rigidity and permanence of a plate of jelly. Hasselbaink also played a leading part in Kewell's goal as the Coventry defence disintegrated again, but by then the show had been stolen by Huckerby, whose performance prompted the inevitable hysteria about England World Cup call-ups. Four years on, maybe.

The unleashing of Huckerby's pace seemed to catch many by surprise, not least the Leeds back four, but as Gordon Strachan, his manager,

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Nationwide League: Bassett prepares for Premiership return as unlucky Reading are relegated

Bart-Williams puts Forest on brink Spiritless City appear to lack stomach for the fray

Nottingham Forest 1 Reading 0

By MATT DICKINSON

NOTTINGHAM Forest are back in the FA Cup Premier Cup. That, at least, is if you believe the City Ground announcer, the club's ecstatic players and the thousands of supporters who cavorted around the pitch after the final whistle yesterday bearing the idolised Pierre van Hooijdonk on their shoulders. After such an outpouring of joy, one only hopes they are right.

They should be. The simple mathematics are that, should Sunderland fail to win away to

Results and tables 34

a buoyant Ipswich Town tomorrow night, Forest will indeed be assured of their return to the elite 12 months after they departed it. The most consistent side in the division, with eight wins in their past ten matches, they will deserve it.

An unlikely and convoluted doomsday scenario awaits, however, in which Sunderland and Middlesbrough win their final two fixtures, the latter scoring a total of nine goals against Wolverhampton Wanderers and Oxford United in the process, and Forest lose without scoring away to West Bromwich Albion next Sunday. Sounds ridiculous? Stranger things have happened.

Dave Bassett, who has seen most things in a colourful management career that has already included four promotions with Wimbledon and two with Sheffield United, was understandably cautious. "I don't want to be presumptuous," the Forest manager said. "I have had a kick in the whistls on a couple of occasions and, when that happens, you are level-headed."

"It has been an amazing season. Any other year, we would have been celebrating weeks ago. We have 93 points and we are still not sure, which is a credit to the other teams like Charlton. Still, the



Woan rushes to congratulate Bart-Williams on his goal against Reading, which has almost guaranteed promotion for Nottingham Forest

fans are going to celebrate and I can understand that. This was a good win for us because it puts the pressure back on Middlesbrough and Sunderland. And now we want to go on and win the title.

One issue resolved yesterday without any further recourse to a calculator is that Reading will begin next season in a new division as well as a new home. John Madejski, the club's ambitious chairman, has funded a new £37 million ground — modestly named the Madejski Stadium — but it will be a rather sad symbol of deluded grandeur in the Nationwide League second division.

Still, they may have lost ten of their last 11 games, and their last nine away, but they were extremely unfortunate yesterday in a game that turned on two moments in the final seven minutes.

Reading substitute, struck a crisp shot from the edge of the area. It flew past Dave Beasant, but, to the horror of the visitors — and Middlesbrough and Sunderland struck the inside of the post

and rebounded to safety. On such tiny margins are entire seasons decided. Five minutes later, Colin Cooper swung a routine free kick into the visitors' penalty area from the right flank. For

the first time all afternoon, the Reading defence was slack and Chris Bart-Williams had the time and space to turn his marker and scuff a shot across Scott Howie from eight yards and into the net.

Reading had batted gamely, their five-man midfield stifling the leaders for long periods and limiting Van Hooijdonk, scorer of 29 league goals in 41 matches this season, to a couple of half-chances.

"We paid for one error," Tommy Burns, the Reading manager, said. "We were up against it, bottom of the league coming to the team at the top, but I thought the players acquitted themselves very well. They worked their socks off and gave everything."

Burns, who joined the club from Newcastle United a month ago, added that he hoped to see out his three-year contract.

While he contemplates his quick transition from the Bell's Scottish League premier division with Celtic to the English second, Bassett can afford to turn his thoughts to a return to the top flight. If Van Hooijdonk can maintain the form that has terrorised the first division this season, they should be capable of surviving and quite possibly thriving.

Kevin Campbell, with 23 goals in 42 games, will also have a point to prove after his unhappy experiences last time around. That, of course, is assuming Forest go up — and you would not have found anybody in Nottingham yesterday who thought otherwise.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (4-4-2): D. Stewart — I. Beardsley, C. Cooper, S. Christie (sub: J. O'Hara, 45th), A. Rogers — S. Stone, A. Johnson, S. Gurney, C. Bart-Williams — P. van Hooijdonk, K. Campbell (sub: I. Moran, 43).

READING (4-5-1): S. Howie — A. Barnett, L. Parry, P. Parkinson, S. Gray (sub: S. Swales, 49) — S. Lovell, J. Crawford, D. Cooney, M. O'Neill, J. Lambert — J. McCarthy (sub: R. Peck, 22, sub: P. Bryson, 73). Referee: G. Frankland.

Table titled 'THE STATE OF PLAY NATIONWIDE' showing promotion and relegation details for various football divisions.

Phillips maintains the pressure on neighbours

Sunderland 3 Stoke City 0

By LYNNE CRITCHLEY

SUNDERLAND kept their nerve in the game of catch-up after Middlesbrough's win at Port Vale on Friday. Kevin Phillips's brace helped his club to return to second place in the Nationwide League first division in front of a record crowd of 41,200 in his team's final home match. In the process, he became the first Sunderland player to exceed 30 goals in a season since Brian Clough, 36 years ago.

Alan Durban, the Stoke City manager, said of his side: "They were completely overawed in the first 20 minutes. Phillips and Quinn ran them ragged." Quinn's aerial supremacy and Phillips's strength and constant marauding in the last third of the pitch created innumerable problems and it took only five minutes for Darren Williams to drill a shot through a packed penalty area and into the net after Kevin Ball's lob rebounded off the bar.



Phillips: struck twice

It was only after half-time, though, that Sunderland supporters lost their edginess. Allan Johnston's superb long ball cut open the Stoke defence. Phillips beat the off-side trap and coolly slotted the ball past Southall. He added another, his 31st of the season, from a deflection off a Clark shot, two minutes from time.

The outstanding performance, though, came from Johnston. The Scotland international was the architect of several fluent attacking moves. He contrived dazzling runs, produced precision passes and was unlucky not to score, shooting fiercely

against the bar and forcing a series of excellent saves from Southall. It will be a nail-biting week for both teams. Even if Stoke defeat Manchester City on Sunday, they may still be relegated. At the top of the division, Sunderland play Ipswich Town at Portman Road on Tuesday and Middlesbrough meet Wolverhampton Wanderers at the Riverside 24 hours later.

Peter Reid, the Sunderland manager, remains cautious. "I am not daft. We've got a very difficult game at Ipswich," he said. Ipswich are guaranteed a play-off place and Phillips, who played alongside some of their players in the England B international last week, said: "I think they were saying that the manager might be thinking of resting a few of them."

The managers of Charlton Athletic and Middlesbrough would not be amused. SUNDERLAND (4-4-2): P. Reid — D. Holloway, J. O'Grady, D. Williams, M. Gray, R. Sumner, A. Ball, L. Cole, D. Johnston — N. Price, N. Quigg (sub: D. Hoyle, 69th).

STOKE CITY (4-4-2): N. Spittal, D. Turley (sub: P. Hodgson, 79) — A. Keoh, R. Williams, R. Heath (sub: M. Jones, 79) — D. Crowe, E. Lightbourne (sub: T. Thorne, 73). Referee: T. Jones.

Supporters have really taken to the Ball-game

Portsmouth 3 Huddersfield Town 0

By PAT GIBSON

THE Portsmouth players went on a lap of honour after victory in their last home game had lifted them out of the bottom three and given them a fighting chance of avoiding relegation from the Nationwide League second division. It would have been more appropriate, though, if they had taken seats in the stands and done the cheering while their supporters ran around Fratton Park.

If ever a crowd has kept a club afloat, it is Alan Ball's self-styled "Blue and White Army". It is not so much the impact that Ball has had on the players as the effect he has had on the supporters since he was asked to pick up the pieces in the wake of the controversial Terry Venables regime.

They have been like that since the day I came back," he said. "We have a togetherness, the fans and me. I think they appreciate what I tried to do the last time I was here. If we do stay up, they will be the

major factor. Not me. Not the players. The fans have kept the club and the team going." For a while, though, the atmosphere they created looked like being counter-productive. Huddersfield Town, relegation candidates until a remarkable resurgence after Peter Jackson took over as manager, could relax. Portsmouth had to win to have any chance of survival after drawing three and losing five of their previous eight games and were a bag of nerves.

It took a huge stroke of luck in the 27th minute to calm them down. Igoe and Durmin had combined beautifully to play Pethick in on the right, but he completely mis-hit his shot. It seemed to be going wide until it struck Edmundson and trickled into the net with Harper, the goalkeeper, stranded.

Portsmouth were a different side after that, with the experienced Durmin outstanding. When he won a free kick on the hour, Igoe put the ball into the goalmouth and Thomson forced it in from close range. Ten minutes later, Durmin got the goal that he deserved when Igoe set him up.

Portsmouth have still to beat Bradford City away on Sunday to be sure of staying up, but they have already given Ball a four-year contract. Perhaps they should secure the supporters on an even longer-term deal, though that should not be necessary. "I'm Portsmouth till I die," they sing.

PORTSMOUTH (3-5-2): A. Fagan — A. Thomson, A. Adams, A. Westwood — P. Pethick, S. Igoe, D. Miller, M. Vickers (sub: M. Allen, 67th), M. Robinson — M. Sainsbury, J. Durmin.

HUDDERSFIELD TOWN (4-4-2): S. Harper — S. Baddy (sub: L. Lawson, 55), Richardson (sub: T. Henry, 79), B. Horne, G. Johnson (sub: M. Nelson, 63) — P. Barrie, M. Stewart. Referee: M. Flesher.

Ball togetherness

Ball togetherness

Spiritless City appear to lack stomach for the fray

David Maddock sees a 1-1 draw against QPR prolong the agony for Royle's team

THE one inescapable conclusion from this shambolic encounter is that Manchester City are going down. There were plenty of distractions from the main issue — an alleged head-bumping incident in the tunnel before the game, an aged steward rather foolishly re-monstrating "with" Vinny Jones, three critical goals and a sending-off — but the only real significance was that City failed to win.

It means that they must defeat Stoke City on the last day of the season to stand any chance of avoiding the drop into the Nationwide League second division. Even then, they could go down, but it is surely academic anyway, because this team does not possess the spirit required to go to the Potteries and emerge with three points.

Jones, the Queens Park Rangers player-coach, knew that his attempt to intimidate George Kinkladze in the tunnel on Saturday attracted the attention of the chief steward, who reported him to the fourth official for an apparent attempted head-butt on the Georgian — but it worked. Kinkladze did score a quick-witted goal after 43sec, but he hardly broke into a run subsequently.

Jones responded with an almost amused indifference to the claims of Bill Knight, the steward, in question. "There are always rumours about me, they follow me everywhere and they are accusing me of all sorts of things," he said. "But I don't know what they are on about, I wasn't anywhere near Kinkladze. I know that the steward tried to stop me going on the pitch and I told him that he couldn't do that."

According to another City player who witnessed the incident, Jones merely tried to intimidate Kinkladze by baring his teeth, growling at him and issuing a few colourful descriptions of what he might do to him. Kinkladze was substituted after a performance of strolling antipathy, his goal apart. At least he had

the wit to see that the goalkeeper was not concentrating when he was fouled 20 yards from goal within seconds of the start and send in a sharp free kick that found the unguarded net.

Joe Royle, the City manager, was questioned in a media room that seemed to have been infiltrated by supporters. Why had he substituted Kinkladze, one man with a scarf hidden under his jacket asked. "If you don't know the answer to that, you shouldn't be in here," Royle responded. Never has a truer word been spoken.

The problem for Royle was that the rest of his team took a lead from Kinkladze. "Unprofessional and lacking in common sense," he said of them, and that was being kind. QPR's first goal came when Margerson, the City goalkeeper, offered Gallen the ball to take a quick free kick in front of an open net. Sheron was the grateful recipient.

After 21 minutes, Pollock, the City captain, topped even that act of generosity. Lobbing the ball in a graceful arc over his own head and an attacker, he then lifted a header over his own goalkeeper. If only City could show such skill at the other end.

They got a point when Bradbury turned in a cross from Edgill just after the break and had the chance to secure all three when Quashe got himself sent off for an idiotic act of retaliation on Dickov in the final minutes. By then, though, the spectators knew that QPR had the point that secured their own safety in the division and that City were held fatally below the waterline. As metaphors go, it serves adequately, not just this season, but the past two decades at Maine Road.

MANCHESTER CITY (4-4-2): M. Sheron — G. Brennan (sub: C. Russell, 88th), K. Symons, A. Vaughan — J. Whalley, J. Pollock (sub: J. Birtch, 65), S. Taylor (sub: J. Birtch, 65), S. Taylor (sub: J. Birtch, 65), S. Taylor (sub: J. Birtch, 65). Referee: K. Leach.



Kinkladze is mobbed by his Manchester City team-mates after giving them the lead against Queens Park Rangers

Lawrence is reprieved, Adams simply relieved

Brentford 2 Luton Town 2

By IVO TENNANT

IN PLACE of the jig of delight from David Platt on the touchline, there was merely an assertion from Lennie Lawrence, his successor as manager of Luton Town, that the club must never go through such a season again.

For Brentford, the Nationwide League third division still beckons. "I am delighted to say I have 90 more minutes as a second-division manager," Micky Adams said. He paused and added: "Because I deserve it." Brentford, a point above the bottom four clubs, will not relish their final assignment, away to Bristol Rovers.

Luton remain pleasing to watch and belong at the other end of the second division. Twice they led, only to give away one goal through a long throw and another from a free kick.

Brentford, who reached the play-off final at Wembley last year, have largely themselves to blame. They sold the nucleus of their side — Asby, Smith and Asaba all departed, followed by Forster and Grainger

— and the money was not properly reinvested. The supporters are disenchanted and a forecast of likely trouble came when some supporters spilled on to the pitch after the second Luton goal. A punch-up between the players upon the restart may not have been entirely unconnected.

"I never thought I would be so thrilled with a point," Adams said. Luton really should have won. Their opening goal in the tenth minute was volleyed in by Marshall, who, injured in so doing, promptly departed. Scott, unchallenged, headed in Brentford's equaliser from a long throw by Bates.

Allen, who is on loan from Tottenham Hotspur and whom Lawrence would like to sign, gave Luton the lead again directly after Aspinall had struck the crossbar at the other end. Nine minutes remained when Hutchings headed in a curled free kick from Watson. As Adams remarked, there is not as yet an R alongside Brentford's standing in the league table.

BRENTFORD (3-5-2): K. Odean — D. Cook, J. Brown, G. Hoeg — S. Blaney, C. Hinchey, G. Cochrane (sub: A. Jones, 70th), M. Spittal (sub: G. Callaway, 58), P. Vickers — A. Scott, T. Harrison (sub: F. Rowley, 58).

LUFTON TOWN (4-4-2): R. Davies — G. Alexander, S. Davis, A. Whay, M. Thomas — J. Widdows, S. Scott, P. McClean (sub: M. Sving, 87), D. Morrison (sub: S. Gough, 12, sub: G. Oshely, 83) — D. Oshely, M. Allen. Referee: M. Hoyle.

Boreham Wood are cut down to size by Lewis

Boreham Wood 1 Hendon 2

By WALTER GAMMIE

A WIN away to bottom-placed Oxford City tonight will bring Kingstonian the Ryman League title after Boreham Wood's hopes were all but extinguished by Hendon, who completed the double over their North London rivals at Meadow Park on Saturday.

Headed goals in either half by Junior Lewis gave Hendon an advantage that meant an injury-time goal by Marshall, from a textbook pass on the left by Hollingdale, came too late for Boreham Wood.

The main damage to Boreham Wood's ambitions had been done on Thursday, when a 2-0 lead at home to Heybridge Swifts dissolved into a 3-2 defeat as two players were sent off. Kingstonian made no such mistake in seeing off Heybridge 3-0 on Saturday.

A subdued crowd, numbering a mere 515 and among whom only the Hendon contingent was animated, reflected the mood. Bob Makin, the Boreham Wood manager, reckoned what they saw was all too familiar. "All season, we've been creating chances and not scoring them," he said. "Getting that first goal can be vital. When it then goes against you, it seems to count double."

Phil Wallace, the chairman, said: "We can't be too gloomy about a season in which we finished runners-up in the league and had two good cup runs." He is intent on moving the club forward. Work begins next month on replacing the main stand, which will help the club's cause in putting their name forward for the proposed Conference second division of which Wallace is an eager supporter.

BOREHAM WOOD (3-5-2): M. Taylor — S. Gray, G. McNeil, A. McArthur — D. Cooney (sub: P. Shaw, 67th), B. Sower, S. Taylor, M. Brown, R. Hollingdale — A. Smith (sub: K. Dixon, 63), S. Marshall. HENDON (3-5-2): G. McCann — S. Beard (sub: N. Satter, 89), C. Beaumgard, J. White, S. Bakeman, S. Charles — P. Kelly, A. Kelly, P. Hooper — J. Lewis (sub: M. Burton, 67), P. Whitcombe (sub: R. Rogers, 84). Referee: T. Conn.

Macclesfield home in on another rise in status

Macclesfield Town 3 Chester City 2

By BILL EDGAR

MOSS Rose has brought nothing but luck since it became Germany's Euro 96 training headquarters. Germany won the tournament and, subsequently, the league record of its permanent occupants, Macclesfield Town, has been almost immaculate: two seasons, two home defeats, two promotions.

This victory completed an unbeaten home record during a campaign in which Macclesfield have confounded most predictions by climbing straight into the Nationwide League second division. It is as though the frustration and indignation they felt at being denied promotion from the Vauxhall Conference because of a substandard ground in 1995 has been taken out on the clubs that were denied their company.

Perhaps the 6,000-capacity attendance on Saturday unnerved Chester City, their Cheshire neighbours, who once attracted only 631 people for a game during their two-year tenancy at Moss Rose. Headers by Steve Wood and Neil Sarvet and a tap-in by

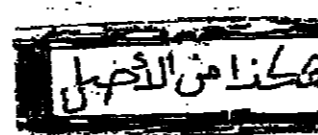
Phil Power gave Macclesfield the win, the visitors replying through Spencer Whelan and a 25-yard strike from Rod Thomas.

A more significant factor in Chester's defeat, and indeed their recent struggle, is their financial strife. Not that Sammy McIlroy, the Macclesfield manager, has it easy, either. Budget constraints mean his players' wages are supposedly among the division's lowest. He deflected personal praise, however. "It's a hell of an achievement by the lads," McIlroy said. "I'd be telling lies if I said this is what we expected."

Macclesfield must improve on their travels next season. They will have the worst away record of any promoted club in the division's 40-year history. More worryingly, their one home defeat this season was a 7-0 FA Cup thrashing by Walsall, whose division they are about to join. Such thoughts can wait, however. At the player-of-the-year award dinner on Saturday night, the celebrations would have been real enough.

MACCLESFIELD TOWN (4-4-2): R. Price — D. Turner, E. Soole, S. Power, R. Ingram — M. McDonald, N. Rowell, S. Wood, S. Whelan (sub: R. Whelan, 67th), J. Ashby (sub: J. Oshely, 74), P. Power.

CHESTER CITY (4-4-2): W. Brown — R. Oshon, S. Whelan, M. Woods, M. Fisher — D. Fildes, G. Price, M. Richardson, S. Rawlins — J. Murphy, D. Wright (sub: R. Thomas, 62). Referee: J. Kelly.



Oliver Holt draws a striking comparison between three rivals for the title of world's best

Stars in stripes go head to head

PA/REUTERS/AP

At the end, when the six minutes of breathless, desperate injury time had been brought to a merciful end and the players of Internazionale had thrown themselves to the floor in a collective agony of disappointment, Alessandro del Piero walked slowly, theatrically, towards the yelling, baying hordes at the southern end of the Stadio delle Alpi in Turin yesterday and raised his arms into the air.

The first instinct of his Juventus team-mates had been to run towards the Curva Nord and leap the hoardings, to drape themselves in the mass of black and white banners that hung there and commune with the fans who had painted a sign that blurted out: "Juventus - Primo Amore". Then, when they realised that Del Piero was not with them, they turned and ran to him. And when they reached him, they lifted him on their shoulders.

It was his day yesterday, his goal that clamped the iron grip of Juventus even tighter on another domestic championship, his poise, his running, dribbling and innovation that dashed the dreams of Ronaldo, the young Brazilian who has been acclaimed as the best player in the world, of winning the Italian title in his first season with Inter.

Del Piero has been beatified in Turin, his image bowed down to like that imprinted on the famous shroud that is on display in the city cathedral here this month. It is the same for Ronaldo in Milan and for Alan Shearer on Tyneside. They are European football's holy trinity, steeped in the sanctity of their goals, and, like the flames of burnished red and brilliant white that the opposing fans hurled at each other in one brief spell in the second half when the game lost their attention, these three superstars are beginning to glow brighter as the World Cup grows ever closer.

The beginning of the tournament is but six weeks away, but the debate is raging already about which of them should be considered the best. All have their own glorious attributes, all their foibles and perhaps it is a simplistic, almost childish, comparison to try to make, but, as Kenny Dalglish, Shearer's manager at Newcastle United, is so fond of saying, "is football not a simple game?"

On the evidence of this weekend alone, two days isolated in a season, then it is Del Piero whose star is in the ascendant. No wonder that rumours have linked him with an £18 million bid from

Manchester United. Del Piero, 23, was unstoppable yesterday in a game where tempers became so inflamed that Gigi Simone, the Inter manager, ran on to the pitch while play was in progress to remonstrate with the referee about a decision that went against Ronaldo.

Del Piero weaved and twisted his way past defenders and their tackles, creating space for other with his dribbling, a creator not just a finisher. He only needed one moment of misguided adventure from his marker, Taribo West, to grab his chance. With West stranded by a poor pass, Del Piero seized on the loose ball in the 21st minute and ran at the retreating defence. When his attempted cross rebounded to him, he clipped it back across Pagliuca immediately and into the corner of the net.

He won a penalty in the second half, too, when West was too slow to anticipate his lightning turn. Pagliuca saved Del Piero's kick with his legs, but he never stopped working. Even in the dying seconds, he sprinted past Fresti and somehow managed to squeeze in a shot in the same movement.

Once more, he was denied by the goalkeeper.

If Glenn Hoddle, the England coach, praised Shearer last week for not thinking hard work were dirty words, then Del Piero would have earned his plaudits, too. Ronaldo, though, is an entirely different animal. Yesterday was one of those days when he appears to be a very expensive luxury.

In the first leg of Inter's UEFA Cup semi-final with Spartak Moscow in Milan last month, Ronaldo was the model of dynamism and breathtaking brilliance, yesterday, he was all languor. He sparked into life occasionally, thrilling with his bursts of speed, his arrowing free kicks and his explosive shooting, but he had nothing on Del Piero.

In this form, Del Piero mixes the individual flair of the Brazilian with the hard work and support play of Shearer. Where Ronaldo, at 21, is still too greedy, too keen to score the spectacular individual goal, Del Piero, who also has the benefit of playing with a sublime provider in Zinedine Zidane, possesses a vision that is more rounded.

What he and Ronaldo possess over Shearer, though, is that they can create goals out of nothing, that they can take on a defence by themselves. Shearer, brilliant striker though he is, is largely reliant on the service that he receives from his team-mates. Against Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday, the service was non-existent. He hardly got a kick, let alone a scoring opportunity. If there are no crosses, no through-balls, he is nothing. If Del Piero and Ronaldo find themselves in a similar situation, they take matters into their own hands.

Hoddle said last week that he would not swap Shearer, 27, for anyone, that Del Piero was not in his class. If he had been here yesterday, he might have chosen his words more carefully.

Tension tells on Celtic as rivals range into view

Hope can be so great a burden that it leaves men groaning under the weight. When it comes to upholding optimism about the Bell's Scottish League premier division, Celtic are badly out of condition after ten years without the championship. The lamentations of supporters were loud on Saturday when a 0-0 draw with Hibernian cut their lead over Rangers to a point.

If rationality had any bearing on the matter, this foreboding would be ridiculous. After all, Celtic have not been in so healthy a position during the closing weeks of the season since they last won the league in 1988. Victories in their remaining matches, away to Dunfermline Athletic and at home to St Johnstone, would guarantee them the title.

Such results ought to be within their scope, but anxiety has begun to muffle their performances. Rangers, after nine consecutive championships, are the more experienced side and, while winning 3-0 against Heart of Midlothian, they must have appreciated how much stress they were inducing in their Glasgow rivals.

The truth of the struggle is almost impossible to establish. Rangers, recalling that they were five points adrift in the middle of last month, can conclude that they are closing on their prey, but Celtic might claim that their position has improved. After defeat in the Old Firm game a fortnight ago, they were level on points with Rangers; now, they hold a clear advantage.

The determining factor will be the degree of conviction that each team finds. Only self-confidence will allow players to rise free of the skills that are becoming encrusted with tension. No team keeps its nerve on every occasion; it is a quality that is endlessly lost, endlessly retrieved.

On Saturday, Rangers will now be the subject of a Scottish FA inquiry. In the fertile atmosphere, Rangers were calm enough to derive encouragement from the news that Celtic were toiling and went on to score three goals in the second half.

There may have been no disorder at Celtic Park, but the mood there was disconcertingly mercurial. Hibernian's resilience was a ghastly surprise to Celtic. Relegation looks almost inevitable for the Edinburgh club, but, if prospects are unaltered, morale, at least, has been enhanced.

Wim Jansen, the Celtic head coach, remarked on the fired air of his team and regretted that so many of the players had been involved in international matches last week. Celtic, more than Rangers, depend on a system that lets them overcome their limitations. Jansen's team lacks the flamboyance that devises easy goals and depends instead on structure and patience.

Nonetheless, they would have muddled their way to victory against Hibernian had it not been for bad miss by Donnelly. The same player was also to be demoted by a linesman's error. Donnelly was rounding the goalkeeper when given offside early in the second half. The decision was lamentable since he had been in his own half when Burley struck the through-pass to him. With the contest for the title so tight, it is a troubling thought that an official's mistake may have as great a bearing on the championship as the efforts of the players.

KEVIN McCARRA



Scottish commentary

TITLE RUN-IN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	34	21	7	6	91	23	70
Rangers	34	20	5	7	74	30	69

MATCHES TO COME: Celtic: May 3; Dunfermline (a); May 5; St Johnstone (h); Rangers: May 2; Kilmarnock (h); May 9; Dundee United (a).

EXCLUSIVE COMPETITION THE TIMES

JVC WORLD CUP QUIZ

In the run up to the World Cup, the most exciting sporting event of the year, The Times is teaming up with JVC to give every reader the chance to win prizes totalling £25,000. This week's prize is a widescreen television.

The winners of last week's quiz were: Mr L Suggitt of Bishops Stortford and Mr N McGuigan of Craigavon. The answers were: 1. Colombian 2. 1950

3. Geoff Hurst. Every week we will be posing three questions to test your knowledge of the World Cup and give you a chance to win a superb JVC prize.

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- Which was the only team to beat England at Wembley in a World Cup match? a) Peru b) Italy c) Japan
- Where will the 1998 World Cup Final be played? a) Wembley b) Hampden Park c) Stade de France
- Which World Cup finalist does Egil Olsen coach? a) Yugoslavia b) Norway c) Czech Republic



0891 calls cost 50p per minute. 0990 calls charged at national rate. Lines open until midnight Wednesday April 29, 1998.

CHANGING TIMES

To ensure customer service quality standards some calls may be recorded.



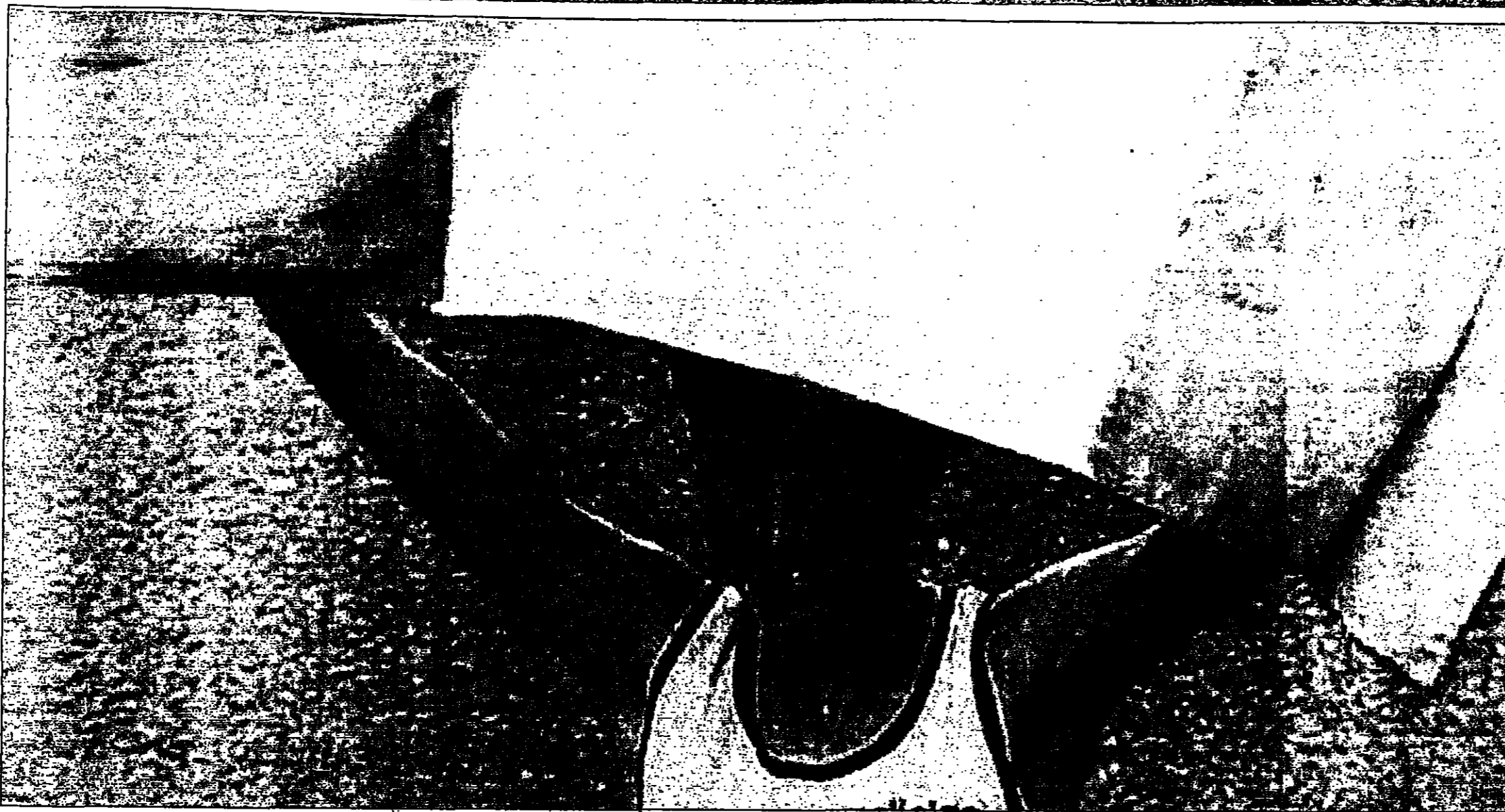
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FLORA LONDON MARATHON



McKiernan flies the flag for Ireland after a bold attack five miles from the finish earned her the Flora London Marathon women's race at her first attempt yesterday. Photograph: Kieran Doherty

McKiernan flies solo to land crown

BY DAVID POWELL
ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

ON A day when Great Britain's best-known butler appeared in the Flora London Marathon, it was a head waiter from Spain who served up a champagne performance. Abel Anton, the world champion, performed his usual trick of letting the opposition tow him round before winning with a kick finish yesterday.

The same could hardly be said of Catherine McKiernan, the winner of the women's race. McKiernan, like Anton, achieved victory in London at the first attempt, but, unlike him, the Irishwoman ran the last five miles alone. As Joe Doonan, her coach, put it: "She took responsibility."

making up the gap of 1min 35sec between the leaders and a chasing group comprising herself, McColgan, Chepchumba, Marleen Renders, from Belgium, and Wang Yanfang, from China. They had remained together while Adriana Fernandez, from Mexico, and Lidia Simon, from Romania, opted for an adventurous first half-marathon.

McKiernan competed without thought for the world record, as she needed to given that this was only her second marathon. Her first had resulted in the fastest debut by a woman, 2hr 23min 44sec, and the priority was victory to build on her triumph in Berlin last year.

Chepchumba third in 2hr 27min 22sec. The world record, held by Tegla Loroupe, from Kenya, is 2hr 20min 47sec and that may be her next objective. "She believes, and I believe, she will run the world record," Doonan said.

McKiernan suffered towards the end, mainly because of a "rumbling stomach". This turned out to be a call of nature that embarrassed her at the finish by refusing to delay its course until she could reach a toilet.

winner. Allister Hutton, from Britain, was 35 years 9 months when he won in 1990. Anton waved four times to the crowd in the final 200 metres, acts of celebration that cost him \$25,000 for a course record.



Results 36-38

Cram talks a good race

STEVE Cram appeared on the streets of London yesterday, a visitor from Planet Football, and left ordinary mortals marvelling at his superhuman powers (David Powell writes). Cram, the former mile world record-holder turned television commentator, finished his marathon debut in 2hr 38min 13sec, placing 174th, the territory of the serious club runner.

Frei goes it alone for second victory in a week

HEINZ FREI, the world record-holder, from Switzerland, dominated the men's Flora London Wheelchair Marathon with a course-record time of 1hr 35min 18sec. Frei led from start to finish to take the London title for a second time. He also won in 1995.

Do it once. Remember it forever. Run the New York Marathon in aid of Mencap. Sunday 15 November 2000. Why not take up the challenge of a lifetime and run for Mencap in the New York Marathon? By joining the team you'll help give people with learning disabilities (mental handicap) a sporting chance in life.

Future elite enjoy limelight

BY JOHN GOODBODY THE 600,000 people who watched the Flora London Marathon yesterday were not only cheering the elite of world athletics. They were also cheering some of the future elite.



Holmes, centre, celebrates his victory in The Times Mini Marathon yesterday

Nearly 3,000 youngsters from across Great Britain took part in The Times Mini Marathon, a 2.8-mile race from Southwark Bridge to the finish in the Mall, and savoured the unique carnival atmosphere that inspires so many men and women.

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FLORA LONDON MARATHON

1,239 runners break three-hour barrier



Here, exclusive in The Times, are the first finishers in the 1998 Flora Marathon... including the 1,239 who broke the three-hour mark.



Comfort and joy: the end of a gruelling day brings mixed emotions for this pair. Photograph: Gill Allen

Table titled 'TOP 50 IN THE MEN'S RACE' listing the top 50 male marathon runners with their names and finishing times.

Main body of race results for men, listing runners in groups of 20, including names like A Anton, A El Mouazziz, A Pinto, etc.

Table titled 'TOP 50 IN THE WOMEN'S RACE' listing the top 50 female marathon runners with their names and finishing times.

Continuation of race results for men, listing runners in groups of 20, including names like A Anton, A El Mouazziz, A Pinto, etc.

Continuation of race results for men, listing runners in groups of 20, including names like A Anton, A El Mouazziz, A Pinto, etc.

Continued on page 37

Advertisement for 'NEW YORK MARATHON. FLY FREE. STAY FOR FREE. RUN FOR MONEY.' with details about raising £1,700 for Tusk Force and participating in a Halloween parade.

Continuation of race results for men, listing runners in groups of 20, including names like A Anton, A El Mouazziz, A Pinto, etc.

Continuation of race results for men, listing runners in groups of 20, including names like A Anton, A El Mouazziz, A Pinto, etc.

Advertisement for 'New York City Marathon FREE!' with details about a free flight and accommodation for participants on November 1998.

Flora London Marathon logo and slogan: 'Flora London Marathon'.

FLORA LONDON MARATHON

FLORA LONDON MARATHON

FLORA LONDON MARATHON

Continued from page 36
03:02:46: S Evey 03:02:46: P Valek
03:02:47: Marshall 03:02:47: A
03:02:48: Pugh 03:02:48: S

1.80: A Jones 03:03:09: M
Brunski 03:03:10: M
03:03:11: J Turner 03:03:12:
03:03:13: D Williams 03:03:13: S

1.81: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J

1.82: A Jones 03:03:09: M
Brunski 03:03:10: M
03:03:11: J Turner 03:03:12:
03:03:13: D Williams 03:03:13: S

1.83: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J

1.84: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J

1.85: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J

1.86: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J

1.87: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S
03:03:36: R Cortland 03:03:36: J



Finishing scene: the elation at reaching the finish is etched on the faces of this group. Photograph: Marc Aspland

03:10:00: P Jaffe 03:10:01: J
03:10:02: G Green 03:10:02: J
03:10:03: M Proctor 03:10:03: M

2.90: K Kennard 03:10:51: J
03:10:52: J Jarvis
03:10:53: C Cannon 03:10:53: M

2.91: M Magri 03:13:48: R
03:13:49: G Selde
03:13:50: G James 03:13:50: G

2.92: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

2.93: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

2.94: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

U Markoff 03:19:00: K Neumann
03:19:01: P Pardon 03:19:01: T

3.20: J Street 03:19:27: N
03:19:28: S Rutter
03:19:29: A Martin

3.21: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.22: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.23: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.24: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.25: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.26: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

3.27: A Kelly 03:03:33: S
Baines 03:03:34: M
Harper 03:03:35: S

NEW YORK MARATHON
Sunday 1st November 1998
FLY AND RUN FOR FREE!
Never mind how much you raise we'd love to have you on the team!
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Painstaking pursuit put under the spotlight

SPORTING television is about shared images. Gaza's tears is the most famous example: a national and an international archetype. I do not share the image because I was in no position to see it. I was, you see, at the stadium in Turin at the time.

I remember watching the finish of the London Marathon a few years back. This time, I was in the right place, in front of the television, and it provided one of my abiding images of sport: one of those magic television vignettes that Says It All. The winner of the women's race threw up the tape and promptly threw up.

In glorious technicolour, a glorious technicolour yawn. Pity and admiration in equal measure from every viewer. It

happened again last year, when Joyce Chepchumba overhauled Liz McColgan in the last few yards and at once threw her heart up.

Forgive me for going on about this, but really nothing could say more about the marathon as a sporting event. These brief, unexpected glimpses that reveal, with startling vividness, a real and sometimes uncomfortable truth are what sporting television does best. Watching the coverage of the race yesterday, I remembered again that magic moment of the victorious televised chuck, the victor's garland of pain. The reward for 26 miles and 385 yards of misery is a bit more misery.

The marathon is a rather grim metaphor of life. Each

marathon runner passes through a little lifetime before our eyes. And the message that comes through is this: life is hard. And then you die.

How ill they all look. These are supposed to be — no, are — some of the fittest people on earth and they all look like death. The event yesterday looked, as it always does, like a race between the inmates of a Home for the Incurables.

"And for those of you that find these sights inspiring, here is the headline for entries for the Great North Run..." The number flashed on to the screen and, doubtless as one person, a thousand among the millions of us witnessing the parade of suffering dived for the telephone. Give me some of that pain!



The mass participation sits strangely with the elite events that, literally, run alongside — you don't, after all, get pan-time horses lining up for the Olympic 100 metres — but it is all part of the marathon's central metaphor: a lifetime and how to get through it.

Some do so by glorious, visible talent, as Catherine McKiernan did with her triumphant bouncing finish up The Mall. Some do it with

blinding ambition, others with humorous acceptance of their own limitations. Some do it with conspicuous, uncomfortable virtue, collecting more money for charities than anyone else. And some do it through buffoonery: here's Sue Barker to interview this year's statutory Man in a Rabbit Suit.

City marathons have become a bizarre aspect of the annual sporting round. Fun

runners, they call them. Given time, I could probably think of other ways of having fun. They talk as if this were 26 miles and 385 yards of giddy bedonism, but it is not fun that is the attraction. It is pain.

And the conquest of it. Because the great thing about running a marathon is that anybody can do it. You don't actually need to be good at anything. It is extremely hard, but it is not in the slightest degree difficult. If you really want to do it, you can do it. In four hours, or six, or eight. The marathon is the world's great attainable goal, the graspable grail, the great flattened Everest of global sport.

A marathon is at the same time remote and within everybody's reach. It is the dream

that anybody can transform into waking truth. Dressed as a Teletubby, if you must. I once sat around a campfire in the Namibian desert discussing marathons. "And tell me Johnny," I said. "What is your best time in a rhino suit? What is the best ever time by a rhino?"

Serious stuff, because Johnny Roberts runs as well as runs for the Save the Rhino Trust and has run God knows how many marathons inside a rhino suit designed by Ralph Steadman.

Most of us spend much of our time watching sport on television and saying: "I wish I could do that." Volleying 'em in shoulder high, like Mark Hughes. Flying round Badminton like Mark Todd. Do-

ing the Pete Sampras slam-dunk.

But when you watch the marathon, you don't have to wish, you know you could. This knowledge tells us a terrible thing about life: that there is a difference between being able to do something and doing it. It is a difference that is infinitely wide, or perhaps just a fag paper.

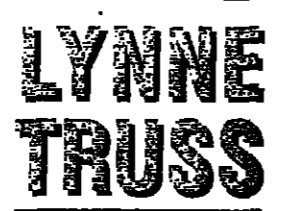
There is a difference between talking about it and doing it, a difference between watching and doing. Odd thing, we live our comfortable lives in front of our nice televisions, we envy what we see and, as the London Marathon unfolds before us, we envy pain, the pain of 30,000 Everests all being climbed at once.

'Charlton have not gone up yet, but they knew they were going to win and went bananas anyway'

Fans turn on to a sweet Valley high

JUST around the corner from the Charlton Athletic ground on Saturday afternoon, men were erecting a stage marker for the London Marathon. Bits of scaffold, bits of painted plywood and the big message: "Five miles." "That's nice," I thought, and maintained my frenzied search for a parking space.

Having never run a marathon — or, let's be honest, a race of any kind — I wasn't quite sure whether the stage marker meant a mere five miles left (hoorah) or the rather less ecstatic other thing (puff, pant, gorbliney). But, either way, it definitely signified more than a message of congratulation to all those lean, rope-legged runners still heroically resisting the lure of tinfoil space blankets and emergency glucose. It meant: "Hup, hup, move along, left leg, right leg, left leg, right leg." And no two ways about it.



With the marathon, obviously, you can only pause and celebrate when it's all over, but with football, it seems, sometimes a premature mood of triumph can be indulged without (perhaps) too much damage. Charlton Athletic, in third place in the Nationwide League first division with 87 points from 45 matches, are not even certain of promotion yet. What with play-offs and whatnot, the finishing line is not really in sight. But since their match against Tranmere Rovers was their last home league game — and they had been unbeaten in the previous 18 — a spirit of self-amazement got the better of them. Ignoring all the famous dangers of hubris, they simply went bananas.

I mean, what to make of the Swedish tenor in an Addicks scarf and a car coat who took the field before the match and sang *Nessus Drama*? Admittedly it was fantastic and my hair stood on end, but who the hell was he? A genuine fan? Meanwhile, pom-pom girls

whipped up excitement in the sell-out crowd and at half-time a man proposed to his girlfriend over the PA from the centre spot.

And all this cakes and ale was just for the hell of it, really. No trophy, or anything. No place in the big league. Yet after the match, the squad made a heart-warming lap of honour. "Let's hear it for the directors!" the MC suggested and instead of the bombardment of lo rolls you'd get at most football clubs I've attended recently, the response was a generous cheer.

The thing is, Charlton have never had so many points before. They haven't scored so many goals in a season (80) for nearly 40 years. They've had six clean sheets in a row (suppress those washday images, if you can) and, in fact, it's been such a fairytale season that I wouldn't be surprised if their new, million-pound club shop just grew up one night from a bean they'd discarded in the garden.

What makes this success additionally pleasing to neutral observ-



Ready to party: two young supporters prepare for victory over Tranmere Rovers and a pre-promotion celebration at The Valley. Photograph: Gill Allen

ers is that it's all been achieved by worthy, old-fashioned application, without swank. Middlesbrough may be neck and neck with Charlton and have a similar history of near-bankruptcy and rescue in the 1980s, but whereas, metaphorically speaking, Bryan Robson sips on turtle soup from a gold spoon, Alan Curtisley brings a sandwich in a Tupperware box. Asked whether he'd like to buy exotic foreign players like Middlesbrough, Peter Varney, the managing director, said that Charlton naturally fancied Brazilians, but couldn't afford the flight.

To be honest, the game on Saturday was only so-so, thrills-free. Clive Mendonca, Charlton's star striker, put away two penal-

ties with aplomb (great title for a novel, incidentally: *Mendonca's Aplomb*). Otherwise, there were two disallowed goals, a lot of unconverted corners and a mounting annoyance among home fans with the Tranmere substitute, John Morrissey, who mysteriously encountered trip-wire whenever he entered the penalty box. John Aldridge, Rovers' hangdog manager, said he'd give the referee a "big fat zero" for unfair awarding of penalties — as if they should be dealt out evenly, like cards.

But if the game was not a sparkler, the crowd was happy anyway. Happy, happy, red, red robins. They knew they were going to win and, when they waved goodbye to the opposing fans, they

did so with an air of finality. "Unfortunately we won't be seeing you next season," the MC said, "because we're going up." Even the quite important result of Sunderland's match with Stoke City (Sunderland won 3-0, keeping them level on points and ahead on goals, with one match in hand) did not quell the optimism. "The guys didn't even ask how Sunderland got on," Curtisley said. "As he left, he added rather wittily: 'Oh yes, the pressure's on them, not us, etcetera, ho hum, you know.'"

Now, I may appear to be changing the subject, but I have a friend who has a regular panic dream in which he is sitting an

exam in an unfamiliar subject. It's a commonplace dream, of course. Just last week, I dreamt I not only had to give a silar recital, but afterwards play in midfield for England. However, my friend's dream has an evil twist, for he knows, as he sits down to his astrophysics paper (or whatever) that, if he doesn't pass, he will drop through an educational trapdoor to age 11 and have to start again.

If Charlton can dare to celebrate before the end, it's because the points system, however ghastly and pressurised, at least contains no hidden snakes and ladders. Other sports are not so lucky. The reason that championship golf generates stomach ulcers is that it's organised on the basis of more

and more snakes, fewer and fewer ladders. The leader can approach the 72nd hole with three shots in hand and then theoretically — given the right breeze from the gallery at the right moment — go to pieces and shoot a 12.

But Charlton, whatever happens next, have made it to the playoffs. There's no trapdoor, no snakes. They are a nice club with a literate fanzine (it mentions Chekhov) and they agonise about rather sweet things, such as whether to keep singing "When the red, red robin" because it's a bit naff. I really hope they go up. And since their last match, away to Birmingham City next Sunday, is the only thing they can do anything about, why not party, eh?

SPORTS LETTERS

BBC should play fair

From the Chief Executive of Channel 5

Sir, Channel 5 is delighted that Chelsea have reached the final of the Cup Winners' Cup tournament. We have shown every match they have played in the competition so far — an estimated 7.8 million viewers followed all or some of the action in the second leg against Vicenza. Sadly, the United Kingdom rights to the final were only available through the European Broadcasting Union and the BBC secured them before the Channel 5 application for EBU membership could be heard.

Superstitious Chelsea fans may have noticed that Aston Villa's fine run in the UEFA Cup — also covered exclusively by Channel 5 until the quarter-final — ended in the round where the BBC managed to outbid Channel 5 for coverage of the away leg. Perhaps the BBC will make a sporting gesture to such fans and now sell on to Channel 5 (EBU permitting) the rights to live coverage of the final. After live coverage of the final, after all, the BBC made no attempt to bid for any of Chelsea's home or away matches throughout the competition. Of course, some Chelsea

fans would miss the match if they lived outside Channel 5's coverage area (which is 84 per cent of the population), but would even they want to break such a fine winning streak at the final stage?

If Chelsea win in Stockholm on May 13, Channel 5 will be showing their defence of the cup next season. And if they lose? They will play in the UEFA Cup instead, with the BBC broadcasting their home matches. Surely another reason for the BBC to do the decent thing of selling on the rights, to avoid any hint of divided loyalties on Chelsea's big night.

Yours faithfully,
DAVID ELSTEIN,
22 Long Acre,
WC2E 9LX.

Past times
From Mr Peter Rhodes
Sir, Contrary to what Simon Barnes writes in today's *Times* (April 20), the crowd of 19,764 at Watford on Sunday, April 19 was not a record for a club match in England outside Twickenham. It is well below that at Headingley on April 2, 1893 to watch Leeds play Halifax in the third round of the Yorkshire rugby union Challenge Cup.

The popularity of club rugby in Lancashire and York-

Further laws necessary against cynical fouls

From Mr Tom Leadbitter

Sir, Picture the scene: the scores are level between two teams, one pushing for success, the other desperately trying to avoid failure. In the dying seconds, the struggling team are given a gilt-edged opportunity to win the match as a striker breaks free of his marker and bears down on goal. He is pursued by one of the opposition, who, realising the danger to the team's season, cynically chops down the attacker from behind with no attempt to get the ball. He is duly and correctly sent off. But what happens next? A free kick is awarded and, with ten men behind the ball, the whole concept of scoring a goal is wrestled from their grasp.

shire at that time was a major factor in the events that led to the Northern clubs parting company with the Rugby Football Union in 1895. It will be interesting to see if history repeats itself.

Yours faithfully,
PETER RHODES,
122 Long Lane,
Attenborough,
Nottingham NG9 6BW.
phr@globalnet.co.uk

Insult to boxing

From Mr Bruce Baker

Sir, Sarah Pouter's article "Follett corners a new market" (April 23) gave a distorted view of professional boxing. Casey's Gym was well-used by local people wishing to learn

self-defence and get fit, as well as professional boxers such as Gary Mason, Chris Eubank and Dennis Andries.

Follett was not the only white face there and certainly not the only woman. The gym was used by at least 15 women boxers trained by Pauline Dixon (also white and a leading personality in women's boxing) and was a very friendly, multi-racial place. Follett herself was welcomed by everyone there with open arms.

The people that Follett has insulted, who taught her much of what she claims to know, understand the truth. Certainly, she will not endeavor herself to many fighters with the attitude displayed in the article, which has caused bad

Are United that tired?

From Mr Ian D. Elston

Sir, I write in response to the article by Rob Hughes (April 20), where he states that Manchester United players are tired, not having had a rest from football for two years because of competing in Le Tournoi and having to play too many games.

I was wondering why this same fatigue does not appear to have affected the Italian clubs, such as Juventus and Internazionale (both still competing for domestic and European honours) who provided a number of players to Le Tournoi and whose Italian internationals have had to play two more competitive games than England in order to qualify for the World Cup.

If we compare the number of games that these teams play by the end of the season, it can be seen that it is a myth that we play more games than our Continental neighbours.

League	Juv	Man U	Inter
34	38	34	
11	8	11	
8	8	6	
Total	53	52	51

Yours sincerely,
IAN D. ELSTON,
Flat C, 8 Willis Road,
Cambridge CB1 2AQ.
richard-boyce@europa.
notes.pw.com

Not buzzing

From Mr Dick Curtis

Sir, Wasps are obviously desperate to avoid dropping into the Allied Dunbar Premiership second division and also have to play the Teley's Bitter Cup final at Twickenham. The club's league programme for the last month of the season is:

April 18: Sale. April 22: Newcastle. April 26: Northampton. April 29: Leicester. May 2: Richmond.

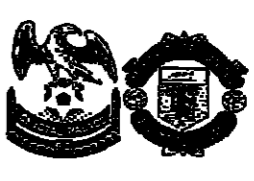
Five games in 15 days — bravo — a week to recover in time for Saracens at Twickenham.

Earlier in the season, they didn't play for weeks; now, they have to fight for every point in the league — and hope to get a surprise piece of silverware.

How do you tackle this one? Best wishes,
DICK CURTIS,
31 Acol Court,
Acol Road,
West Hampstead, NW6 3AE.

Sports letters, with daytime telephone number, may be sent by fax to: 0171-782 5211.
e-mail, including address and telephone number, to: sport.letters@the-times.co.uk

This week in THE TIMES



Tomorrow
Crystal Palace need to win to stay in the Premiership. Manchester United need to win to maintain their interest in the title race. Oliver Holt reports.

Wednesday
The opening shots in cricket's Benson and Hedges Cup.

Thursday
Have Arsenal and Middlesbrough taken important steps in their search for glory?

Friday
How are Wigan Warriors and Sheffield Eagles shaping up for the Challenge Cup final at Wembley?

Saturday
Football Saturday: the Premiership match-by-match. Oliver Holt, Steve McManaman and Danny Baker.

CRICKET: YORKSHIRE'S BOUNDARY COMMISSION TAKES ANTI-PUNISHMENT LINE

Fatigue factor looming large

Some bowlers need molly-coddling, for, without a helping hand or sympathetic ear, they would have far less chance of steering a successful course in a trade in which so much depends on fitness, so much on elusive rhythm.

This can be taken too far, of course. There is much amusement within the county at Yorkshire's action on behalf of Ian Fisher, their young, second-string left-arm spinner, who has signed to play club cricket for East Bierley.

Yorkshire were concerned at the smallness of East Bierley's ground, fearing that its short boundary would expose Fisher's bowling to attack. The club threatened to veto the move and had it acted swiftly would have probably got its way. It wanted Fisher to play for Bradford and Bingley, whose ground is larger.

In the end, the club agreed to let Fisher play for East Bierley on condition that his captain protects him and that Yorkshire may remove him to the Academy side if things go wrong. "We do not want him slaughtered," Chris Hassell, the Yorkshire chief executive, said.

Save The Bowler could be a familiar refrain this summer, although this may appear to be a strange notion after a weekend during which Leicestershire (who thought they were badly treated by the weather last year) failed to add to their 93-ball experience of first-class cricket this season and Northamptonshire lost a sixth entire day's play in ten.

But English bowlers will probably get through more work for their counties between now and the first Test match at Edgbaston on June 4 than many overseas bowlers do for their domestic states or provinces in a year. Those who have a role to play for England are in the midst of an unprecedented schedule of 17 Test matches in 12 months. If there is to be hope of success at home to South Africa or in Australia next winter, they deserve the most sensitive treatment.

England were fortunate to sustain few injuries in the Caribbean, though it should be remembered that Gough and Cork would probably have made the tour had they not broken down last year. Fraser, Headley and Caddick returned unscathed, though

SIMON WILDE



Championship Commentary

only Fraser bowled well enough to command automatic re-selection. And the very fact they endured a demanding tour argues against their remaining fit and effective in the coming months.

It is a problem of which the England management is acutely aware. It is not, in any case, a new one, though the exceptionally heavy programme and the imminence of the World Cup demands that the counties are more coopera-

tive than in the past. Middlesex fully expect David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, to withdraw Fraser from fixtures before the summer is out.

A couple of years ago, Cork virtually carried England's attack. "By the end, I was knackered, emotionally as much as anything," he recalled. "It was a difficult time. I'd been playing county cricket for seven years and spent the previous four winters touring with England. Angus has got to have a rest. Fatigue does get in. At the end of some days, I could hardly walk and I was 24, not 32."

England's prospects may rest as much on their back-up bowlers as the frontliners. The former might include Martin, who played in England's last home Test, and Cowan, who is struggling to locate his rhythm after languishing in the West Indies.

In this context, the name of Mark Bowen, an exiled Yorkshireman on his second county, has emerged. A bowler of fast-medium pace, capable of swinging it either way, Bowen returned unflattering figures in Nottinghamshire's opening match against Derby-

shire, but impressed the critics and, on Saturday, claimed a sixth Somerset wicket at Taunton. At the age of 30, though, he is working against the clock.

Cork has failed to take a wicket against Yorkshire at Headingley and appears to have work to do before returning to England colours. Gough, though he is awaiting a first wicket in the same game, appears revitalised by his winter off and would have claimed a wicket with his third ball on Saturday had not Byas made a rare error at slip.

Nevertheless, he was completely outshone by his new-ball partner, Silverwood, who claimed five wickets in an 11-over opening spell before Cork threw the game open by declaring 216 behind. When Gough withdrew from the West Indies tour, it was Silverwood who took his place, though he was to feature in only two games. Greater opportunities may lie ahead.

Weather permitting, both have the chance today to help Yorkshire to supplant Derbyshire at the top of the championship table. Fisher, standing in for Stemp, may have a role to play too.



Fraser, a marvellous workhorse for both Middlesex and England, signals his relief at the safe completion of another tour after his final ball in the Caribbean

SATURDAY'S SCOREBOARDS

Britannic Assurance county championship

Durham v Gloucestershire

CHESTER-STREET (third day of four) Gloucestershire, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 178 runs ahead of Durham

GLoucestershire: First Innings N J Tinnor c Boon b Harrison 20 R C O Williams c Spaight b Harrison 17 T H Hancock low b Harrison 20 A J Wright low b Wood 9 R Dawson b Harrison 6

Durham: First Innings J J B Lewis low b Smith 7 M A Rastbury b Lewis 16 J E Morris c Trainor b Smith 3 N J Speak c Walsh b Lewis 16

Essex v Sussex CHELMSFORD (third day of four): Sussex, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, are 77 runs ahead of Essex

Essex: First Innings D D J Robinson c Kirtley b Jarvis 85 A P Grayson low b Jarvis 17 A P Grayson c Kirtley b Jarvis 88 N Hueshelt c Moore b Jarvis 43

Essex v Warwickshire THE OVAL (third day of four): Surrey, with four first-innings wickets in hand, are 198 runs ahead of Warwickshire

Warwickshire: First Innings M A Butcher c Hango b Brown 72 J D Rastbury c Gabb b Smith 58 N Sheard c Brown b Smith 10

Essex v Gloucestershire CHELMSFORD (third day of four): Essex, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 103 runs behind Kent

Kent: First Innings D P Fulton low b Butcher 61 M J Walker low b Walker 0 T R Ward low b Butcher 11 C L Hooper c Maynard b Walker 46

Gloucestershire v Yorkshire HEADINGLEY (third day of four): Yorkshire, with all second-innings wickets in hand, are 303 runs ahead of Gloucestershire

Yorkshire: First Innings A McGrath c DeFreitas b Harris 42 T A Watson b Harris 33 M J Wood c Knicker b DeFreitas 102

Gloucestershire v Glamorgan CARDIFF (third day of four): Glamorgan, with seven first-innings wickets in hand, are 103 runs behind Kent

Kent: First Innings S P James low b Hooper 20 A W Evans low b Fleming 20 A Dale c Walker b Hooper 34 M P Maynard not out 0

Derbyshire v Lancashire OLD TRAFFORD (third day of four): Lancashire won easily; Middlesex have scored 205 for four wickets against Lancashire

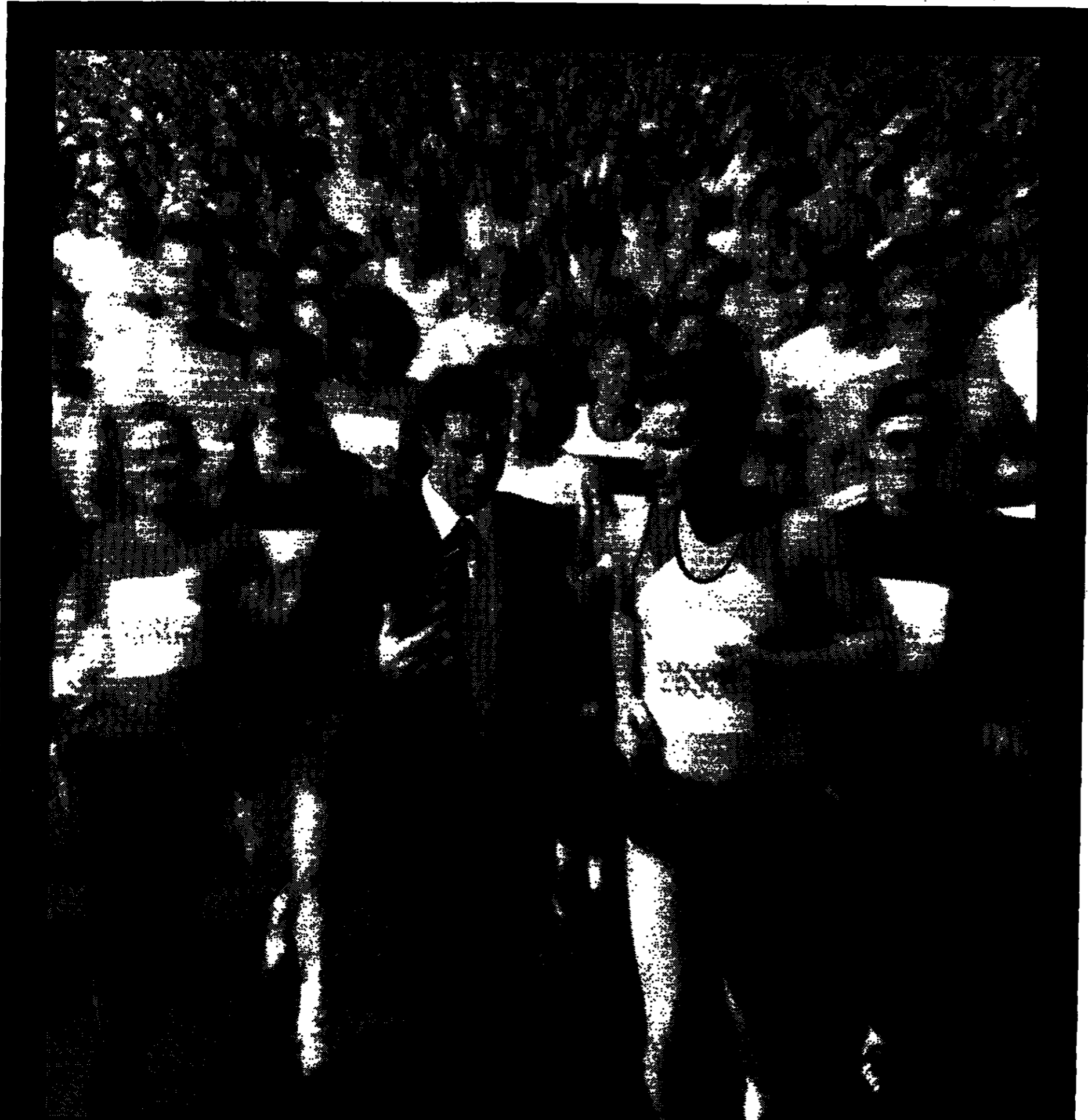
Middlesex: First Innings R A Kettleborough c Hogg b Austin 20 J L Longor c and b Watkinson 89 M R Raza c and b Finnoff b Martin 10

Lancashire: First Innings M R Brown, R L Jackson, J P Hewitt, A R C Foster and P C R Tuffell to bat

Derbyshire v Warwickshire THE OVAL (third day of four): Surrey, with four first-innings wickets in hand, are 198 runs ahead of Warwickshire

Warwickshire: First Innings M A Butcher c Hango b Brown 72 J D Rastbury c Gabb b Smith 58 N Sheard c Brown b Smith 10

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Freitas returns to Yorkshire

Desperate dash led by Smith

كندا من الأصل

Turner and Parsons change face of game

TAUNTON (Nottinghamshire won toss; Somerset (2pts) tied with Nottinghamshire (2))

CRICKET: LEWIS MARKS HIS SECOND COMING WITH LEICESTERSHIRE WITH EXHILARATING DISPLAY

Triumphant return by Simmons

LEICESTER (Worcestershire won toss; Leicestershire (4pts) beat Worcestershire by 49 runs)



Maynard injects some urgency into the Glamorgan innings by hitting Ben Phillips for six during his quickfire 21

Walker enjoys the last laugh

CARDIFF (Kent won toss; Kent (4pts) beat Glamorgan by eight wickets)

four Glamorgan batsmen had managed to find the boundary...

birth of his second child and returned to Sophia Gardens yesterday morning...

DeFreitas returns to haunt Yorkshire

HEADINGLEY (Derbyshire won toss; Derbyshire (4pts) beat Yorkshire by five wickets on D/L method)

Mascarenhas clinches victory but fails to upstage sideshows

SOUTHAMPTON (Hampshire won toss; Hampshire (4pts) beat Northamptonshire by three wickets)

Robinson shows Sussex no mercy

CHELMSFORD (Sussex won toss; Essex (4pts) beat Sussex by 127 runs)

Desperate dash led by Smith

THE OVAL (Warwickshire won toss; Warwickshire (4pts) beat Surrey by eight wickets)

NEIL Smith might feel that every match at the moment is organised for his convenience...

YESTERDAY'S SCOREBOARDS. Table with columns for match, batsman, runs, and bowler. Includes matches like Sussex v Glamorgan, Glamorgan v Kent, Leicestershire v Worcestershire, etc.

Morris gets motoring at long last

CHESTER LE STREET (Durham won toss; Durham (4pts) beat Gloucestershire by two runs)

SCHOOLS SPORT

American imports drive best youngsters overseas

John Goodbody on why home-grown basketball talent is stifled in Britain

Many British sports lose players to foreign countries, but in no sport is the situation so grievous as in basketball...



REBOARDS



Smith: winning captain

Allied Dunbar Premiership: Newcastle make no mistake after rivals are held

Walton ends Bristol's brave fight

Newcastle Falcons 43
Bristol 18

By KEVIN FERRIE

SOMEBODY up there is determined to make life as difficult as possible for Newcastle Falcons in their pursuit of the Allied Dunbar Premiership title. After stormy conditions had blighted their previous home game, they subsequently suffered on the road, three matches yielding a single win.

Yesterday, for a match that had to be won after those defeats by Saracens and Wasps, the Kingston Park faithful were greeted by thunder, lightning and hail and their players seemed determined to make heavy weather of it against a side beaten in its previous ten league games.

Twice in the early stages, Newcastle looked to be setting themselves up for a comfortable afternoon. Slick handling by Tait and Wilkinson in the midfield, after Armstrong's swift delivery, put Shaw over on the right after two minutes. In the eleventh minute, Andrew slipped a tackle and darted over close to the posts.

Yet, on both occasions, Bristol responded almost immediately. First with a try by Yapp, who benefited from a well-fought pass from Lewsey, then when the fly half put over a penalty.

The Newcastle midfield again did well to create an opening after Lam had quickly recycled the ball on the Bristol 22. Legg hitting the line at pace before rounding Hull to score a try that preceded Andrew's second conversion. Yet still Bristol refused to let

Newcastle relax and, when Tait uncharacteristically missed a tackle on Tueti, the Tongan released Yapp, who, in turn, fed Martin. Though the centre was hauled down just short of the line, his forwards arrived quickly to drive over. Moore claiming the try that brought them back within a score at half-time.

A minute into the second half, Lewsey had the chance to reduce the deficit further, but made a mess of his penalty attempt and, from that point, Newcastle took control. The introduction of Walton and Graham, the Scotland forwards, seemed to bring greater urgency and it was Walton, the back-row man, who drove over for what proved to be the decisive score, although he was not credited with it, a penalty try being awarded.

At last, with Andrew converting, Newcastle had a cushion. Walton was instrumental in creating both of Childs's tries, which sandwiched one from Armstrong after Ryan's pick-up and break from a close-range scrum. It was hardly Newcastle's most impressive victory of the season, but it keeps them in control of their own destiny.

Fred Howard, the Bristol manager, threatened an official complaint that Newcastle's players had been wearing the longer, rugby-league style studs, which are illegal. However, Robin Goodfellow, the referee, who checked the studs of Van-Zandvliet and Graham, after Howard voiced his concerns, said that he was satisfied that the studs were legal.

SCORERS: Newcastle: Tries: Shaw (2), Andrew (1), Legg (1), penalty by (4), Childs (2), (5), (6), Conversion: Andrew (1), (2), (3), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21), (22), (23), (24), (25), (26), (27), (28), (29), (30), (31), (32), (33), (34), (35), (36), (37), (38), (39), (40), (41), (42), (43), (44), (45), (46), (47), (48), (49), (50), (51), (52), (53), (54), (55), (56), (57), (58), (59), (60), (61), (62), (63), (64), (65), (66), (67), (68), (69), (70), (71), (72), (73), (74), (75), (76), (77), (78), (79), (80), (81), (82), (83), (84), (85), (86), (87), (88), (89), (90), (91), (92), (93), (94), (95), (96), (97), (98), (99), (100), (101), (102), (103), (104), (105), (106), (107), (108), (109), (110), (111), (112), (113), (114), (115), (116), (117), (118), (119), (120), (121), (122), (123), (124), (125), (126), (127), (128), (129), (130), (131), (132), (133), (134), (135), (136), (137), (138), (139), (140), (141), 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Lee crosses for the try that helped secure a point for Saracens despite the close attentions of Hamilton, the Leicester scrum half

Saracens' teenagers make their point

Leicester 10
Saracens 10

By DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THERE have been so many demonstrations this season of the short-term approach in English rugby that it is worth celebrating a hint of the long term. When Saracens left Welford Road on Saturday, they did so with a team including two 19-year-olds, one English, one Welsh, which had enjoyed distinctly the better of their drawn Allied Dunbar Premiership match.

Indeed, Saracens have never been closer to winning at Leicester. They achieved as much without four of their key personnel, all from the decision-making areas of half back and back row, which suggests that the point they concluded with was well-earned, even if they needed to win to keep pace with Newcastle.

Of their two teenagers, one, Tony Roque, the England Colts flanker, started a Premiership match for a first time; the other, Matthew Powell, the Welsh Schools scrum half, finished it as a replacement. Both are developing as rugby players by leaps and bounds in the illustrious company that they are keeping. It was not the easiest of weeks for Saracens. Francois Pienaar, their player-coach, who damaged a hamstring the previous weekend, has been hit hard by the death of Kitch Christie, his World Cup coach, at whose funeral in Johannesburg tomorrow he will offer a eulogy; injuries to Richard Hill and Kyran Bracken have been compounded by the absence of Michael Lynagh, who had an operation on a growth in his groin last week.

"It makes you realise how delicate the balance of life is," Lynagh said, but there is optimism that he, Pienaar and Bracken may yet be fit in time for the Tetley's Bitter Cup final

on May 9. By that time, the virus that has also swept through the team — three of them were ill during the interval against Leicester — should also have cleared, though Saracens will miss their experienced trio in this week's Premiership games against Harlequins and London Irish. Yet all teams face similar problems — for example, Leicester will be without their two England hookers this week after Dorian West broke his jaw in the first half of the match on Saturday.

The injury could remove West from the England summer tour and, with Richard Cockerill suffering from a shoulder problem, Leicester must dig deep for their games against Wasps and, next Monday, Newcastle. They must comfort themselves with the knowledge that this draw hauled them up alongside Bath and made the possibility of a third-place finish more realistic.

Leicester are a team playing by instinct. The change of management that followed the dismissal of Bob Dwyer — a board meeting on Thursday could determine the way forward next season — has created unforeseen problems, which a dogged determination among the players is helping to paper over. That quality was best demonstrated in defence, which withstood a tremendous pounding from Saracens for most of the first half and much of the final quarter.

Apart from Jamie Hamilton's well-taken try, from a swift tapped penalty and extravagant dummy that opened a 50-metre run to the line, they created only one other opportunity and Jorner was brought back because Rowntree and Paul Wallace were engaged in single combat elsewhere. Saracens, for all their absences, played constructive football throughout, none more than Tony Diprose, their captain. The No 8 led by example, provid-

ing a focus for his forward colleagues and a quality of thought not always evident in the English game. Much could be made of Johnson's three missed penalty attempts, were it not for the memory only six days earlier of Lynagh himself missing three such kicks against Newcastle. The leggy South African was a rare handful in attack and did come up with the kick that mattered — the conversion of Lee's try, which levelled the scores with five minutes remaining.

SCORERS: Leicester: Try: Hamilton (48min); Conversion: Stranely (58); Saracens: Try: Lee (75); Conversion: Johnson (Penalty goal: Johnson (42))
SCORING SEQUENCE (Leicester first): 3-0 (Penalty), 5-3, 10-3, 10-10.
LEICESTER: M Horak, C Joiner, S Pater (cap), J Overend, S Pinner, W Greenwood, J Lloyd (cap), A Hasley, S J, J Stranely, J Hamilton, G Rowntree (pen), F Jorner (55), D West (pen), J Alderman, 40, J Gardner, M Johnson (pen), van Heerden, P Guedard (pen), M Coory, 71, N Beck, E Miller.
SARACENS: G Johnson, R Constable, P Sallis, S Ravenscroft, R Wallace (pen), B Bartlett, 40, A Lee, M Owan (pen), M Powell, 71, R Gray, G Chase, P Wallace, P Johns, D Gwosdz, B Sturman, A Roque, A Diprose, E Morrison (Bristol).
Referee: G Hughes (Manchester)

Richmond spoil the travelling Shed's day

Richmond 33
Gloucester 22

By NICOLAS ANDREWS

TWO teams similarly steeped in rugby union history, evenly matched in the Allied Dunbar Premiership and on only their second league meeting — but what wouldn't Richmond give for a home and a following such as Gloucester have at Kingsholm?

They have yet to confirm that they will be playing first-team fixtures at the new £37 million home of Reading FC next season (they are also pondering sharing with Harlequins at the Stoop), but it would take some unlikely cooperation from the local council to keep Richmond at their home of the past 128 years.

Gloucester did their best to improve the atmosphere at the Athletic Ground on Saturday. The club had called for help in an attempt to end the team's appalling away record and cherry-and-white-shirted fans were conspicuous by their presence. The travelling Shed also inspired the Richmond support to unprecedented vocal effort.

Gloucester unarguably had the better of the second half. However, an all too typical lapse in concentration, when they conceded three tries in 11 minutes, had by then given Richmond Hill's men too much of a momentum to climb. A bonus-point try to two tries took him to 29 for the season and even closer to an England four place, but John Kingston, the Richmond director of rugby, is hoping that the call does not come. "It wouldn't do him any harm to stay at home this summer," he said.

SCORERS: Richmond: Tries: Penalty by (17min), S Quinnell (20), Wright (27), Chapman (2), (28), (45); Conversion: A Mackintosh (11), Gloucester: Tries: Mackintosh (11), Ojomoh (28), Saint-Andre (58); Conversion: Mackintosh (2); Penalty goal: Mackintosh (15), (16), (18), (22), (25), (28), (31), (32), (35), (38), (41), (44), (47), (50), (53), (56), (59), (62), (65), (68), (71), (74), (77), (80), (83), (86), (89), (92), (95), (98), (101), (104), (107), (110), (113), (116), (119), (122), (125), (128), (131), (134), (137), (140), (143), (146), (149), (152), (155), (158), (161), (164), (167), (170), (173), (176), (179), (182), (185), (188), (191), (194), (197), (200), (203), (206), (209), (212), (215), (218), (221), (224), (227), (230), (233), (236), (239), (242), (245), (248), (251), (254), (257), (260), (263), (266), (269), (272), (275), (278), (281), (284), (287), (290), (293), (296), (299), (302), (305), (308), (311), (314), (317), (320), (323), (326), (329), (332), (335), (338), (341), 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Swalec Cup: Llanelli power through to final against Ebbw Vale
Seven Sisters give up their dream

FOR an hour, Seven Sisters enjoyed their moment in the sun, but their dream of creating history by reaching the Swalec Cup final came to an end at The Gnoll, Neath yesterday.

They had to give way, not to the greater skill, but rather the persistence of a Llanelli team that, in the first half, failed to show the difference in their respective league status.

The game started to drift away from the village club 12 minutes into the second half, when Wyatt, for the first time during the afternoon, found himself with acres of room and the opposition defence flat-footed.

The score had changed hands six times in the first half. Seven Sisters might have made a greater impression had they been able to consolidate their efforts once they had taken the lead.

Gerald Davies on the gallant but inevitable end to a fairytale

no doubt made a difference. Instrumental, too, in their change of fortunes was the presence of Rupert Moon at scrum half in the final 40 minutes.

The Llanelli front row had to be rearranged in the second minute when David Jones, their tight-head prop, was carried off with a knee injury.

Cooper's unconverted try was overhauled by James's penalty, which was in turn overtaken by another Warlow penalty, but Llanelli were not allowed a moment's relief before Evans, going right, changed his mind, straightened and dropped a smart goal.

a partisan and good-humoured crowd. Yet instead of going into the interval with a lead, Paget knocked on from Llanelli's kick-off, which supplied the platform for Proctor to cross for his try.

A minute into the second half, a penalty from Andrew James levelled the score. James, a fine placekicker, hopes to join Leeds next season, where a former Seven Sisters old boy, Phil Davies, is director of coaching.

This proved to be the village club's last hope. Llanelli, instead of becoming embroiled in the close encounters, started to spin the ball wide. Moon's long passes created space in midfield and spread what had been, up until then, a tight Seven Sisters defence.

Before the final, on May 23rd at Ashton Gate, Bristol, Llanelli have another engagement with Ebbw Vale on Saturday, which also has serious consequences. The match could decide which of the two clubs end up in the top four in the league and so enter the Heineken Cup next season.



Wareham celebrates after crossing the line to record the only try for Seven Sisters

Best has the last laugh on Quins

London Irish 62
Harlequins 14

BY PETER BILLS

TWO storms broke at Sunbury on Saturday, one climatic in the second half, the other human-generated. The latter, created furiously by London Irish, left Harlequins broken and bedraggled.

A demolition of such proportions had one man's fingerprints all over it: Dick Best, Harlequins' former director of rugby, who was sacked last season and is now coaching consultant to the Irish.

Best saw his new team produce rugby of such innovation, sophistication and pace that few teams would have lived with them. It was the Exiles' greatest victory in league rugby and, by some distance, Harlequins' worst league defeat.

Quins were dire and the club is in a mess. Newcastle and Saracens are among Harlequins' three remaining opponents and, with Irish now two points behind them, some of their officials were discussing the prospect of finishing next to bottom of the table.

England may tour Dallaglio

Wasps 20
Northampton 15

BY DAVID HANDS
RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

THE pleasure that Wasps took, not only from another victory yesterday in the Allied Dunbar Premiership but from defeating their London rivals, Harlequins, in the first division, was tempered by the frank admission from Lawrence Dallaglio that he needs to rest.

"I don't believe my performance this season has been up to the level I would expect of myself," Dallaglio said. "I have been told by very experienced people that, if I continue to play, the injury could become chronic and I might need surgery."

The flanker therefore cast doubt on his involvement in the England tour to the southern hemisphere. From my point of view, and that of Wasps and England, we need a fully fit Lawrence Dallaglio next season. If I don't run, I run the risk of not being fit for the World Cup.

Dallaglio has made himself available to tour, but he left the clear implication that Clive Woodward, the England coach, might choose to leave him at home or, if selected, that he might play no more than a couple of matches. But for Wasps' situation in the relegation zone, Dallaglio would already have taken the opportunity to rest and when he believes his club to be safe — or the administrators make it so — he will stand down.

The events of the past fortnight have made it easier for him. Playing with the confidence derived from beating Newcastle, the Premiership leaders, last Wednesday, Wasps offered a degree of purpose sadly lacking in Northampton. Wasps, with the exception of the lineout, dominated every phase of play.

Callard mystified by Bath decline

Bath 19
Sale 29

BY ALAN PEAREY

YOU would have thought Sale had won the league. At full-time, the replacements sprang from the bench to embrace the muddy victors and John Mitchell, their coach, seconds later, sunshine gave way to a torrential downpour. It was that sort of day for Bath.

Come rain or shine, they can do little right at the moment. European champions they may be, but Saturday brought an unprecedented fourth successive defeat in the Allied Dunbar Premiership.

Morgan try secures promotion

West Hartlepool hold on for 11-10 win

CHRISTOPHER IRVINE sees champagne flow as West Hartlepool hold on for 11-10 win

CHAMPAGNE was sprayed from the dressing-room door. When Michael Brewer emerged, it was with a mug of tea and a quiet word of thanks to those who believed that he would get West Hartlepool back into the Allied Dunbar Premiership first division. Now all the former All Black forward has to do is keep them there.

Gary and Alan, illuminated the place in the Eighties and two more New Zealanders have been bedrocks this season — Jamie Conolly, a powerful centre, and Ivan Morgan, whose burrowing try from No 8 effectively ended London Scottish's own automatic promotion hopes on Saturday.

The difference between promotion and remaining in the second division is £250,000 in television money, a fortune by West's frugal standards. Finances are also behind the probable move next season to Hartlepool United Football Club's ground at Victoria Park. "Again, it's about being realistic. Shared facilities, shared overheads, a synergy with sponsors," Brewer said.

Unless Bedford, the other promoted side, were to win at West next Saturday by a margin greater than 54 points, Scottish's only route to the first division would be via the play-offs — if there are any —



Brewer: tight budget

GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Table with columns for TODAY, TOMORROW, FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY, OTHER SPORT, and CRICKET. Lists various sports events and fixtures for the week.

Table with columns for OTHER SPORT, CRICKET, and RUGBY UNION. Lists various sports events and fixtures for the week.

Table with columns for LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES, PUBLIC NOTICES, and LEGAL NOTICES. Lists various legal notices and public announcements.

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Peslier excels at game without frontiers

Chris McGrath on a jockey creating his own version of a unified Europe

When one of the highest rungs on the ladder suddenly snaps, there is no need to fret if you already have a foot on the next one. It is a measure of the seamless ascent of Olivier Peslier, now at the peak of his profession in Europe, that he might have to wait just a week before consolidating himself for the loss of one undisputed champion, Peintre Celebre, with the arrival of another, Xaar.

Peintre Celebre was abruptly retired over the weekend, having succumbed to a tendon injury on the eve of his intended reappearance in yesterday's Prix Ganay at Longchamp. His astonishing five-length rout of the Prix de l'Arc de Triomphe field, at the same venue last autumn, was a performance of grandeur.

Peslier, naturally, confesses himself heartbroken by the unhappy conclusion to Daniel Wadsworth's bargain with Coolmore Stud, that Peintre Celebre be allowed another season of racing — including raids on Epsom and Ascot — before taking up a stallion career. "He was the best I have ridden," Peslier said. "The only one that could quicken twice."

But that, in effect, is what Peslier is doing. If Peintre Celebre gave his career its dizzyest surge, this weekend he



Peslier enjoys all the trappings of a successful modern jockey thanks to such big-race victories as the Arc win of Peintre Celebre, who was retired on Saturday

craves another from Xaar, odds-on for the Sagitta 2000 Guineas. It will be Xaar's third visit to the Rowley Mile, after the seven-length Dewhurst win that sealed his status as champion juvenile, and a successful classic rehearsal in the Craven.

Such conquests have become routine on these shores for Peslier, at 25 the prince of European racing. The manner is cosmopolitan, the effect imperious. While he managed to retain his French championship last year, Peslier accumulated no fewer than 43 group

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Fleetwood suffers training setback

HENRY CECIL, hoping that Jibe can atone for his quiet start to the season in the Sagitta 1000 Guineas on Sunday, suffered a cruel reverse over the weekend when Fleetwood broke down with tendon trouble (Chris McGrath writes). The colt looked a fine prospect when winning his only start as a juvenile at Haydock by eight lengths.

Loving Claim, the Guineas second favourite, will stay in France if there is cut underfoot at Newmarket. The going is good to soft, but Joe Mercer, Sheikh Maktoum Al Maktoum's racing manager, said yesterday: "Newmarket dries very quickly, so we're still hopeful that it will be good by the weekend."

The prospects of Courtesou, containing his sire, Generous, in the Vodafone Derby were dismissed by the Tote at 40-1 after he won the Thresher Classic Trial at Sandown on Saturday. John Gosden, trainer of Muhtathif, concluded that the well-beaten favourite did not stay.

Adrian Maguire, so often in the wars this season, enjoyed a hero's welcome when Call It A Day won the Whitbread Gold Cup on the same card. "Breaking bones is the easy bit," he said. "The real pain comes sitting around and watching the winners you should be riding."

Richard Dunwoody completed his ninth hundred for the season — beating Peter Scudamore's record when Samamind scored at Worcester on Saturday night.



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SATURDAY'S RESULTS

Sandown Park

Going good to soft.
2.15 (1m 14yd) 1. Florad (P) (Eckley, 15-2) 2. West Venture (7) 3. Indian Missile (4) 4. Top Gun (1) 5. S. C. (2) 6. D. (3) 7. D. (4) 8. D. (5) 9. D. (6) 10. D. (7) 11. D. (8) 12. D. (9) 13. D. (10) 14. D. (11) 15. D. (12) 16. D. (13) 17. D. (14) 18. D. (15) 19. D. (16) 20. D. (17) 21. D. (18) 22. D. (19) 23. D. (20) 24. D. (21) 25. D. (22) 26. D. (23) 27. D. (24) 28. D. (25) 29. D. (26) 30. D. (27) 31. D. (28) 32. D. (29) 33. D. (30) 34. D. (31) 35. D. (32) 36. D. (33) 37. D. (34) 38. D. (35) 39. D. (36) 40. D. (37) 41. D. (38) 42. D. (39) 43. D. (40) 44. D. (41) 45. D. (42) 46. D. (43) 47. D. (44) 48. D. (45) 49. D. (46) 50. D. (47) 51. D. (48) 52. D. (49) 53. D. (50) 54. D. (51) 55. D. (52) 56. D. (53) 57. D. (54) 58. D. (55) 59. D. (56) 60. D. (57) 61. D. (58) 62. D. (59) 63. D. (60) 64. D. (61) 65. D. (62) 66. D. (63) 67. D. (64) 68. D. (65) 69. D. (66) 70. D. (67) 71. D. (68) 72. D. (69) 73. D. (70) 74. D. (71) 75. D. (72) 76. D. (73) 77. D. (74) 78. D. (75) 79. D. (76) 80. D. 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AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NFL EUROPE: Rhein Fire 13 Barcelona Dragons 9, England Monarchs 14 Scottish Claymores 10

AUSTRALIAN RULES

AUSTRALIAN LEAGUE (AFL): Collingwood 18 18 (108) vs Essendon 12 16 (88); Sturt 18 18 (104) vs North Melbourne 12 15 (87); Hawthorn 16 16 (124); Sydney 10 12 (66); Richmond 10 11 (65); Carlton 9 12 (54); Adelaide 11 10 (71); Melbourne 10 11 (65); West Coast 10 11 (71); Adelaide 12 15 (93); Geelong 9 13 (61)

BADMINTON

SOPA: European championship: Men: P. Gade (Denmark) 2-0 vs K. Jonsson (Den) 15-11, 4-11; Women: C. Fung (Den) 2-0 vs K. Morgan (Wales) 11-2, 11-4

BASEBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Friday: Philadelphia 8 St Louis 4, Florida 5 Colorado 12, Montreal 6 Arizona 5, Los Angeles 12 Chicago Cubs 4 Pittsburgh 4 San Diego 2, Toronto 7 Florida 5, St. Louis 3, Cincinnati 2 New York Yankees 4 Detroit 4, Minnesota 9 Arizona 4 Florida 3, Chicago Cubs 2, San Diego 2, Toronto 7, Philadelphia 8

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE: Semi-final play-off: Memphis 72 Toronto 71, Birmingham 84 144-142 vs Manchester 84 Portsmouth 59 Manchester won 178-129; Toronto 71 Birmingham 84 144-142 vs Manchester 84 Portsmouth 59 Manchester won 178-129; Birmingham 84 Portsmouth 59 Manchester won 178-129

RUGBY LEAGUE

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Second division

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Australian National League

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Northampton

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Second division

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Worcester

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FOR THE RECORD

Penelope (Pillar, holder) by J. Luno-Zarzo (Spain) 2nd

CYCLING

MAASTRICHT: Holland: Amstel Gold World Cup race (200km), 1. R. Jansman (Netherlands) 42:58, 2. M. van Garderen (Netherlands) 43:05, 3. B. Horowitz (USA) 43:10

TOUR OF THE PHILIPPINES

TOUR OF THE PHILIPPINES: 9th stage (120km), 1. T. Kuylenstierna (Sweden) 4:02:58, 2. V. Pineda (Philippines) 4:03:15, 3. M. Alcaraz (Spain) 4:03:32

BOXING

CARDIFF: ICE RINK: World Boxing Organisation super-middleweight championship: J. C. Gomez (Spain) 5-0 vs J. Gomez (Spain) 5-0

MANILA: Philippines: World Boxing Council super-flyweight championship: G. Manzanera (Philippines) 5-0 vs G. Manzanera (Philippines) 5-0

FOR THE RECORD

Long (Coville Wheelers) 54.43, 3. G. Wainwright (Long Eaton CC) 54.43

Time trials

ITC: Cyclo-cross (50km), 1. S. Dargatzis (Cyprus) 43:10, 2. M. van Garderen (Netherlands) 43:15, 3. R. P. Breda (Italy) 43:20

HOME NATIONS TOURNAMENT

HOME NATIONS TOURNAMENT: 1st round: Scotland 3-0 England, 2-0 Wales, 1-0 Ireland

GYMNASTICS

ST PETERSBURG: European championship: Men: Floor exercise, 1. A. N. Morozov (Russia) 15.800, 2. S. D. B. (Russia) 15.700

ICE HOCKEY

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Northampton

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Second division

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Northampton

Northampton table

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Trade figures clue to effects of sterling

There are few British statistical releases this week, but what is on offer goes to the heart of current economic debate. Tomorrow British trade figures with the rest of the world in February and non-European Union trade for March will be read carefully for signs that the strength of sterling is damaging exports and leading to a deterioration in the balance of payments.

The consensus market forecast compiled by Standard & Poor's MMS is for a further widening of the global deficit in February to £1.9 billion from £1.1 billion in January. The non-EU deficit is forecast to come down to £1.2 billion from February's £1.6 billion, which was exaggerated by the import of erratic items such as silver.

On Friday the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply publishes its April purchasing managers survey of manufacturing industry — of key interest given all the debate about whether manufacturing is on the brink of recession. The March survey surprised the markets because, for all the scare stories emerging about the effect of the strong pound on manufacturing activity continued to expand. Also on Friday comes publication of March figures for consumer credit. These figures will be analysed for any evidence that consumer demand is starting to slow.

The focus of financial markets is likely to turn to America this week with the release of a number of important statistics, particularly at the end of the week. On Thursday the latest employment costs index (closely watched by the US Federal Reserve) is published along with the first snapshot of first-quarter gross domestic product. This is followed on Friday by April's US purchasing managers' report and figures for personal income.

The focus at the end of the week will be Saturday's meeting of European heads of state in Brussels to decide finally on membership of the single currency. No major surprises are expected, although there could be a decision on who leads the European Central Bank.

JANET BUSH

Clouds gather over the high street



John Hoerner's demerged Arcadia saw firm trading in women's wear over Christmas

DEBENHAMS: The high street retailers will feature strongly this week and should provide an indication of how much consumer spending has slowed since Christmas. The overall picture is expected to be gloomy, reflected by last week's subdued retail sales numbers.

Interim results from Debenhams today will be the first since the group demerged from Burton Group (now Arcadia) in January. The estimate of pre-tax profits ranged from £72.5 million to £76.5 million with the consensus figure pitched at £74.8 million. That compares with the equivalent of £65 million last time.

Nick Bubb, retail analyst at Société Générale Securities, the broker, is looking for £76 million and is not optimistic about prospects with the shares still trading below their start-up price. "It was a disappointing Christmas for the group and that has probably carried on," he says.

Ian Macdonald at Williams de Broe, the broker, says Debenhams will not be able to sustain the levels of growth it has achieved in the past five years.

ARCADIA GROUP: Half-year figures from Arcadia, whose chief executive is John Hoerner, expected on Thursday, are unlikely to contain many surprises. Mr Bubb is forecasting a pro forma figure of £47 million with any improvement stemming from the big adjustment on the debt burden that will lead to a lower interest charge. Operating profits are expected to be up 15 per cent at £50 million achieved on the back of a 9 per cent increase in sales. Margins should be firm with the women's wear side outperforming menswear.

"Christmas trading was strong but what has happened since February may be a bit of a mute point," says Mr Bubb.

SEARS: Brokers believe that full-year results from the Selfridges stores chain will be nothing short of disastrous when it reports tomorrow. They expect profits to be more, or less, halved on last year's figure of £80 million. But this will be achieved before the huge restructuring costs that will have to be taken into account after the disposal of the British Shoe Corporation. Estimates of write-offs start from £50 million upwards.

Much of this is already in the

price and brokers will now concentrate on the way forward. There is already talk that Selfridges will either be sold or demerged later this summer.

Despite the collapse in profits, a final dividend of 2.95p is envisaged, making the total for the year a maintained 3.95p.

ALLIED DOMCOQ: Half-year results from the spirits and pubs retailing group on Thursday, are expected to show the ravages of the strong pound. The group said in February, that sterling's strength would mean interim profits would be "marginally lower" than for the same period last year.

Brokers are looking for pre-tax profits in a range of £295 million to £315 million compared with

£317 million last time. A rise in the interim dividend to almost 10p a share is forecast against 9.44p last time.

Brokers are forecasting about £30 million of adverse exchange losses in the first six months with an impact of £50 million for the full year to August 31, 1998.

Nick Williamson at Credit Lyonnais Securities Europe, the broker, has pencilled in pre-tax profits of £309 million and an interim dividend of 9.9p. Nick Lyall, at Société Générale Securities, is looking for interim pre-tax profits of £296.5 million. He says that Allied's spirits arm will face an increasingly difficult trading environment with increased competition on both brands and pricing.

City speculation claims that

Allied is poised to link with another leading drinks company or form new international drinks distribution alliances. There has also been talk of a demerger of the wines and spirits division from the pubs and retailing arm.

Sir Christopher Hogg, chairman, has looked at the demerger option but has so far ruled it out. But he is under pressure to deliver higher returns and enhance shareholder value.

Rumours were circulating last week that Allied had been approached by Schroders, the merchant bank, which was reckoned to be keen to offer £2.5 billion for the 2,600-strong pubs chain on behalf of a client. Analysts say the business is worth nearer £3 billion. They reckon the sale of the pubs chain could also speed the

more urgent question of a spirits merger and get talks with Seagram moving again.

BAT INDUSTRIES: First-quarter figures on Friday will be overshadowed by the ongoing attempts to reach a tobacco compensation settlement in the US and the forthcoming demerger of the financial services arm of the business.

The group is expected to report pre-tax profits for the first three months of the year of between £510 million and £560 million compared with restated profits of £560 million a year ago. BAT reported headline pre-tax numbers of £585 million for the same quarter last year but that figure will be adjusted downwards to reflect year-end exchange rates.

Brokers said the US situation remains difficult to predict in the wake of the proposals outlined in the McCain Bill. The revised settlement has been rejected by the industry.

Meanwhile the demerger of its financial services division, which is to be merged into Zurich Insurance Group continues apace. BAT reassured the market at its full-year results announcement on March 11 that the proposed merger is on schedule.

DAVID BROWN: Growth is set to continue with the maker of transmission systems, gears and hydraulics pushing further into Far Eastern and US markets. Arabella Grant at Panmure Gordon, the broker, predicts full-year pre-tax profits £1 million higher at £19.2 million in the year to December 31, when the group reports tomorrow, throwing earnings a share 1.5p ahead to 20.2p. She expects the dividend to be lifted to 9.5p from 8.4p.

MCCARTHY & STONE: Credit Lyonnais predicts pre-tax profits of £5.8 million from the six months to February when the company reports tomorrow. The retirement flats builder made £6 million in the comparative period, but this included a £1.5 million profit on disposal.

The payout should grow to 0.75p from 0.66p, payable from earnings per share of 3.1p against 3.2p. Operating margins are expected to be maintained at 17 per cent with volumes up some 12 per cent and operating profits up 13 per cent to £6.2 million. A strong trading statement is expected.

RESULTS AND STATISTICS

TODAY
Interims: Debenhams, Spintab AB, Stratagem Group, Wards Stores, WFF Group, Finales, Caldwell Investments, EIS Group. Economic statistics: No UK data scheduled for release, US March existing home sales.

TOMORROW
Interims: Fibernet Group, Leeds Sporting, McCarthy & Stone, Finales, David Brown Group, ESI, Sears. Economic statistics: UK February global, March non-European trade, UK March harmonised index of consumer prices, Confederation of British Industry April industrial trends survey, US March durable goods, API weekly oil supply statistics.

WEDNESDAY
Interims: Twofourten United Colliers, VTR, Finales, Citicore Group, Haccor, Ryan Hotels, Shilo. Economic statistics: UK British Bankers' Association analysis of March mortgage lending, UK first-quarter mortgage repossessions.

THURSDAY
Interims: Allied Domecq, Arcadia Group, Finales: none scheduled. Economic statistics: UK Business Strategies first-quarter consumer market bulletin.

FRIDAY
Interims: BAT Industries (Q1), Unilever, Finales: none scheduled. Economic statistics: UK Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply April manufacturing sector survey, UK March net new consumer credit, UK March final M4, M4 lending, UK British Bankers' Association analysis of first-quarter bank lending.

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.6673 (-0.0179)
German mark 2.9923 (-0.0542)
Exchange index 105.9 (-1.7)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 3788.4 (+3.8)
FTSE 100 5863.9 (-58.3)
New York Dow Jones 9064.62 (-102.88)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 16011.24 (+307.44)

Competition helps to stop engineers' wages spiralling

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

COMPETITIVE pressures in British engineering are keeping a lid on pay settlements despite widespread skills shortages, according to the Engineering Employers' Federation.

The EEF said that the latest figures confirm that the engineering industry is showing restraint despite pressure to raise wages from skills shortages and falling unemployment. The strength of the pound and high interest rates are helping to maintain wage discipline.

Engineering settlements are running at a much lower level than the 5.2 per cent rate of growth in private sector average earnings in February. The publication of this figure last week prompted Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, to call on employers in the private sector to show restraint.

The average level of engineering pay settlements rose slightly to 3.5 per cent in the three months to the end of March, up from 3.4 per cent in the previous three months. However, this was still below the 3.6 per cent average recorded a year ago.

Of 499 settlements collated by the EEF, 442 were in January at an average of 3.44 per cent. The 32 settlements in February averaged 3.49 per cent and 25 in March averaged 3.88 per cent.

The latest marketing trends survey from the Chartered Institute of Marketing today finds that the strength of sterling is expected to force firms to hold down price increases to below 1 per cent.

Overall, the survey expects economic growth to continue but inflationary pressures to remain subdued.

A separate report today from the West Midlands Regional Group of Chambers of Commerce said that service sector firms were now experiencing a decrease in orders. Ken Beaumont, the group's chairman, said that exporting prospects of companies in the region were looking bleak.

Bank	Buy	Sell	Bank	Buy	Sell
Australia \$	2.69	2.48	Netherlands Gld	0.699	0.830
Austria Sch	22.05	20.39	New Zealand \$	3.12	2.89
Belgium Fr	64.95	59.59	Norway Kr	13.02	12.71
Canada \$	2.16	2.37	Portugal Esc	318.76	296.73
Cyprus Cyp	0.820	0.849	S Africa Rd	9.11	8.15
Denmark Kr	12.20	11.11	Spain Ptas	205.51	245.93
Finland Mk	6.63	6.58	Sweden Kr	13.67	12.67
France Fr	10.53	9.72	Switzerland Fr	2.04	2.42
Germany Dm	5.18	2.91	Turkey Lira	417.82	373.21
Greece Dr	547	538	USA \$	1.772	1.829
Hong Kong \$	13.73	12.53			
Iceland	131	111			
Ireland Pt	1.94	1.15			
Israel Shk	0.82	0.97			
Italy Lira	2095	213.84			
Japan Yen	251.27	213.84			

Answers from page 42

- COLOBOMA**
(b) A congenital and hereditary eye defect. A notch, hole or fissure anywhere in the eye, ie, at birth, quite a lot of the eye is missing, producing defective vision or blindness. Bilateral Coloboma is common in Charolais cattle, often involving the optic disc. It can be recognised only by ophthalmoscopy. The condition does not deteriorate.
- BILIRUBIN**
(a) The orange-coloured pigment in the bile, produced by the breakdown of haemoglobin. It is carried, bound to proteins, in the plasma to the liver, where it combines with glucosides and is then excreted. Failure to excrete produces jaundice.
- REVOLAX**
(b) On April 27, 1808, General Klingspoor, with 5,000 Swedes, surprised a Russian column under General Bonlaton. The Russians were surrounded and only 1,000 managed to fight their way out. Bonlaton fell fighting.
- TEDESCA**
(a) An early word for the dance that was later called an Allemande. Both mean German, especially a German dance. Also applied to Ländler, hence Beethoven's "Alfa Tedesca" in Piano Sonata, G major Op 73 and Quartet B flat Op 130.
- SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE**
1... Nxd4+; 2. Rxd4 Rg1+; 3. KB Qxd3+ 0-1.

How hard is your money working for you?

- (a) It doesn't do a stroke.
- (b) It just about breaks sweat.
- (c) It never has a day off.

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Chesterfield attracts suitors for bid battle

BY CARL MORTSHED

MEPC and GE Capital are on the verge of a bid contest for Chesterfield Properties, the £150 million property group that owns a chain of West End theatres and Curzon cinemas.

SBC Warburg, the investment bank, is believed to have secured a £160 million offer from MEPC, the property group run by James Tuckey, which will soon be cash rich after the sale of its Australian and US portfolios. Warburg was appointed to seek a buyer because Roger Wingate, Chesterfield's chairman, who owns about a third of the company, is keen to buy out the troubled theatre and cinema chain.

Shares in Chesterfield enjoyed a rally after the appointment of Robert Maxted as chief executive and the deci-

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OUTLOOK
The world's...
APRIL 27 1998

Capitalisation, week's change

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Table with columns: Company, Price, % Chg, Div Yield, P/E. Includes sections for ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, BANKS, BREWERIES, PUBS & REST, DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS, ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONIC & ELECT, CHEMICALS, CONSTRUCTION, ENGINEERING, DISTRIBUTORS.

Table with columns: Company, Price, % Chg, Div Yield, P/E. Includes sections for INVESTMENT TRUSTS, ENGINEERING VEHICLES, FOOD MANUFACTURERS, HEALTHCARE, HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT, LEISURE & HOTELS, OIL & GAS, BRITISH FUNDS, SHORTS (under 5 years), LONGS (over 15 years), UNDATED, MEDLIMS (5 to 15 years).

Table with columns: Company, Price, % Chg, Div Yield, P/E. Includes sections for MEDIA, PHARMACEUTICALS, PRINTING & PAPER, MINING, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL.

Table with columns: Company, Price, % Chg, Div Yield, P/E. Includes sections for OTHER FINANCIAL, SUPPORT SERVICES, PROPERTY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, TRANSPORT, WATER, RETAILERS, FOOD, RETAILERS, GENERAL.

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NPC big doubt Cendant sued over share sale

CORPORATE PROFILE: Boots

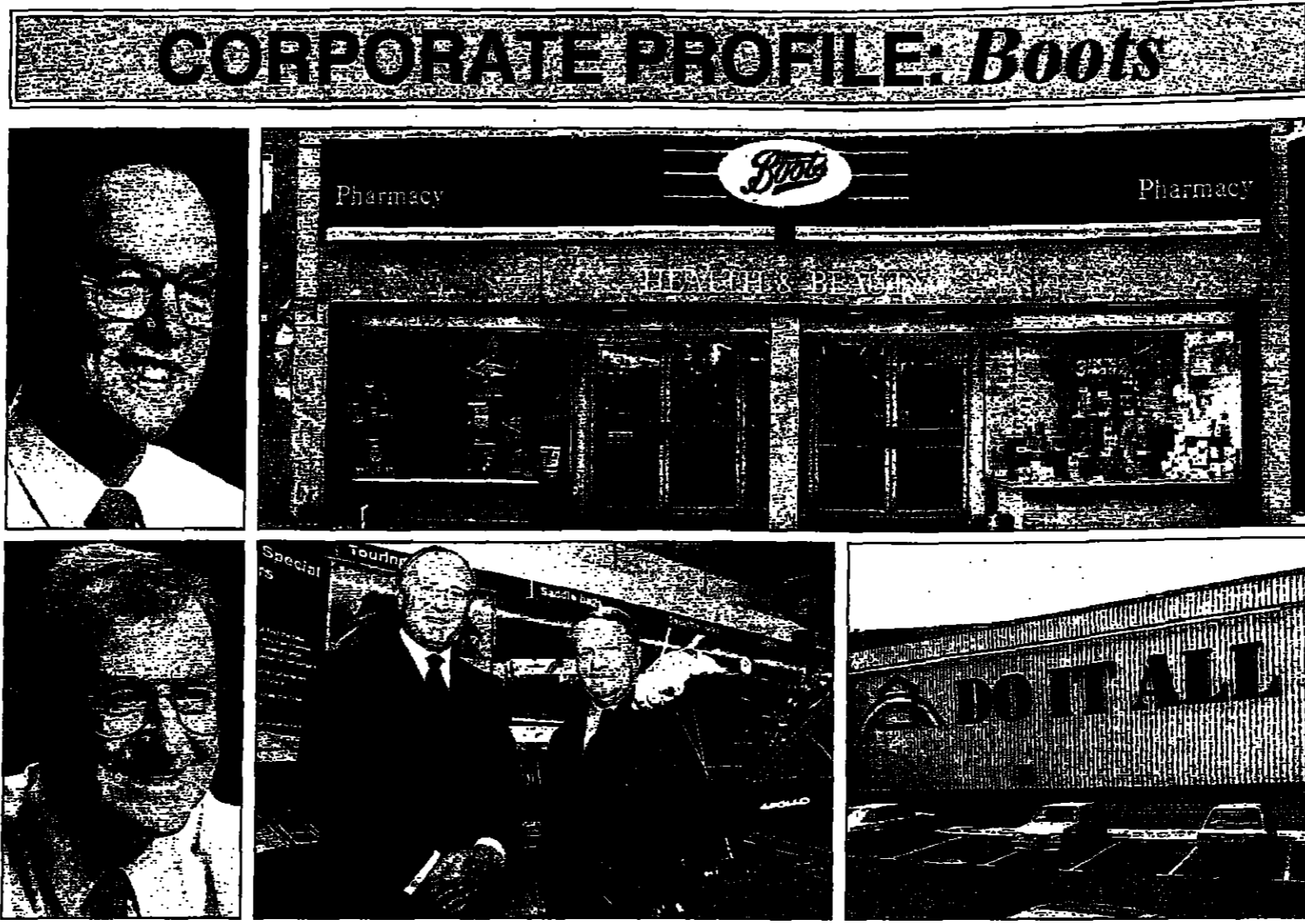
THE FACTS

Turnover: £4.6 billion (year to March 31, 1997)
 Pre-tax, pre-exceptional profit: £586.2 million
 Employees: 80,988
 Overview: By far the largest division is Boots the Chemists, which accounted for £3.3 billion of the group's turnover. Other retail businesses are Halfords, Do It All and Boots Opticians. Its other divisions are Boots Contract Manufacturing, Boots Healthcare International and Boots Properties.

THE BOARD

The chairman of Boots is Sir Michael Angus, who was previously chairman of Unilever and currently chairs Whitbread.
 Lord Blyth of Rowington is deputy chairman and chief executive and has run the group since 1987. He was formerly group managing director of Plessey and head of defence sales at the Ministry of Defence.
 From the same ministry comes Sir Clive Whitmore. He was Permanent Secretary there and then held the same position at the Home Office. He was recruited as a non-executive in 1994.
 Another non-executive is Sir Peter Davis, chief executive of the Prudential. Like Lord Blyth, he has been a government adviser, although while Lord Blyth advised the Conservatives on the Citizen's Charter, Sir Peter has advised the current administration on the New Deal on employment for young people. Sir Peter can also claim retail experience, having worked for ten years at J Sainsbury, where he became assistant managing director.
 Another non-executive with retail experience is Fiona Harrison, chief executive of Costa Vivalda's fashion retail division.
 The others come from industry. They are: Robert Wilson, chairman of Rio Tinto; John McGrath, chief executive of Diageo; Peter Reynolds, chairman of Pioneer Concrete Holdings; and John Buchanan, chief financial officer and managing director of BP.

Once upon a time, when Brinlan still had an Empire, there were branches of Boots the Chemists literally on the other side of the world, in Suva, the capital of Fiji, and in New Zealand. Those foreign outposts were set up in a rather haphazard way: some were opened to serve troops as part of the Second World War effort, while others were the result of a Pacific voyage by founder Jesse Boots' son, John, who opened branches of his father's business more or less where he landed.
 The only problem with these overseas Boots was that they did not make any money. Eventually, they were sold or shut down and Boots retreated to its British stronghold. Now it is preparing to take on the world once again. This time, though, it is doing it in a more organised, less whimsical fashion — and it intends to make some money. It has opened test branches in Thailand and The Netherlands, is planning to open in Japan and has earmarked 35 other countries where it thinks there is scope for Boots to thrive.
 The City, which has generally viewed Boots as good at what it knows but inept when it tries to do something more daring, has decided that its long-term overseas prospects are good, that the larger stores being opened in the UK offer unexpected growth, that the Advantage loyalty card is building sales and that the over-the-counter drugs business is also a potential winner. All in all, while most retailers are being treated by the market like plague-carriers, Boots is being looked on kindly.
 The change in Boots's image could not come soon enough for Lord Blyth of Rowington, its chief executive. Not long after he took the helm in 1989, Boots launched a hostile takeover bid for Ward White, eventually paying £900 million for the business, which included Halfords, AG Stanley and Payless. It soon became known as the Ward White Disaster.
 Once the books were opened it was clear that the businesses were worth a lot less than the amount paid. And then recession hit the high streets. It was not the sort of mistake that has been easy to forgive. "It was a serious, value-destructive exercise," one analyst said. To its credit, the company has since made huge efforts to keep its shareholders happy by regularly returning cash to them.
 However, there are still a few in the City who remain suspi-



The familiar shop frontage of a high street Boots, and one of the group's Do It All branches; Steve Russell, top left, and David Thompson, bottom, two obvious internal candidates eventually to replace Lord Blyth, pictured alongside Sir Michael Angus, right, at a Halfords store

gious of Boots. "It is still essentially the same team there that bought Ward White," another analyst said.
 Despite his inauspicious start, Lord Blyth has stuck with Boots for nearly a decade, and time has finally begun to dim memories of Ward White. AG Stanley has been sold, Halfords is doing nicely, Payless, which is now called Do It All after merging with the former WH Smith-owned business, is benefiting from the benign climate for DIY businesses and may also eventually be sold.
 Also in his favour, other deals done by Lord Blyth have been more successful, particularly the 1995 sale to BASF of the pharmaceuticals side of the business. The deal slanted Boots very much towards retail, but it still contains some big, though less well-known, manufacturing businesses. Its contract manufacturing arm

makes cosmetics and toiletries for its own chemists and for other retailers (although not, understandably, for Boots's fellow high street institution, Marks & Spencer). It has also developed a potentially highly lucrative business in developing, manufacturing and marketing over-the-counter stalwarts such as Nurofen, Strepils, Optrex and even Sweetex.
 Boots has been keen to promote BHI as a big growth area, persuading analysts to value it on a multiple of its sales rather than on its losses. This has been partly behind Boots's

improved share price performance in the past year.
 And if Boots's image with investors is changing, so is its image with the public. Under Steve Russell, the joint group managing director and managing director of the chemists business, Boots has tried hard to become not just the place where you go for headache cures. His theme is "look good, feel good" and he sees Boots as becoming more and more like a "well-being" magazine, with sections devoted to health, beauty, food and so on.
 Its new larger stores are on edge-of-town sites and are typically 10,000 sq ft in size, or larger. It now has 21 such stores and plans to open a further 20 to 25 this year. After many years of presuming it was near saturation in the UK (it now has about 1,300 stores), the company has discovered that Boots is not necessarily somewhere people pop into on

their way somewhere else, but can be a destination in itself.
 The range of goods on sale is also changing. It recently launched its own health and travel insurance. Other such departures can be expected, according to Mr Russell, as a result of the information gathered with its Advantage loyalty card — now held by an amazing 7.2 million people — and of changes in management structure, which is now designed so that more ideas can flow upwards through the ranks.
 Boots remains a huge presence in Nottingham, where it occupies an extensive site near the university and employs a large number of local people. Despite its efforts to promote a trustworthy image, Integrity Works believes that Boots's ethical expression is some way short of best practice. It rates Boots 5/10 and believes that the company needs to consider explaining in more detail how

ethical expression is some way short of best practice. It rates Boots 5/10 and believes that the company needs to consider explaining in more detail how

THE EXPERTS SAY

"Importantly, it now appears that the larger format stores provide Boots the Chemists with an 'incremental' customer that has, for example, moved from the high street to more convenient edge-of-town locations. Consequently, at this early stage, it appears that the additional trading area is generating incremental turnover rather than cannibalising the existing high street chain."
 Richard Edwards, Salomon Smith Barney

"Boots's attractive stores, reputation for service, innovative own-brand products and value for money should enable the format to win share in fragmented international markets... Our research indicates that Boots is able to establish a valuable international retail brand which should provide a boost to medium-term earnings growth."
 Scott Fansley and Robert Miller, Dresdner Kleinwort Benson

SARAH CUNNINGHAM

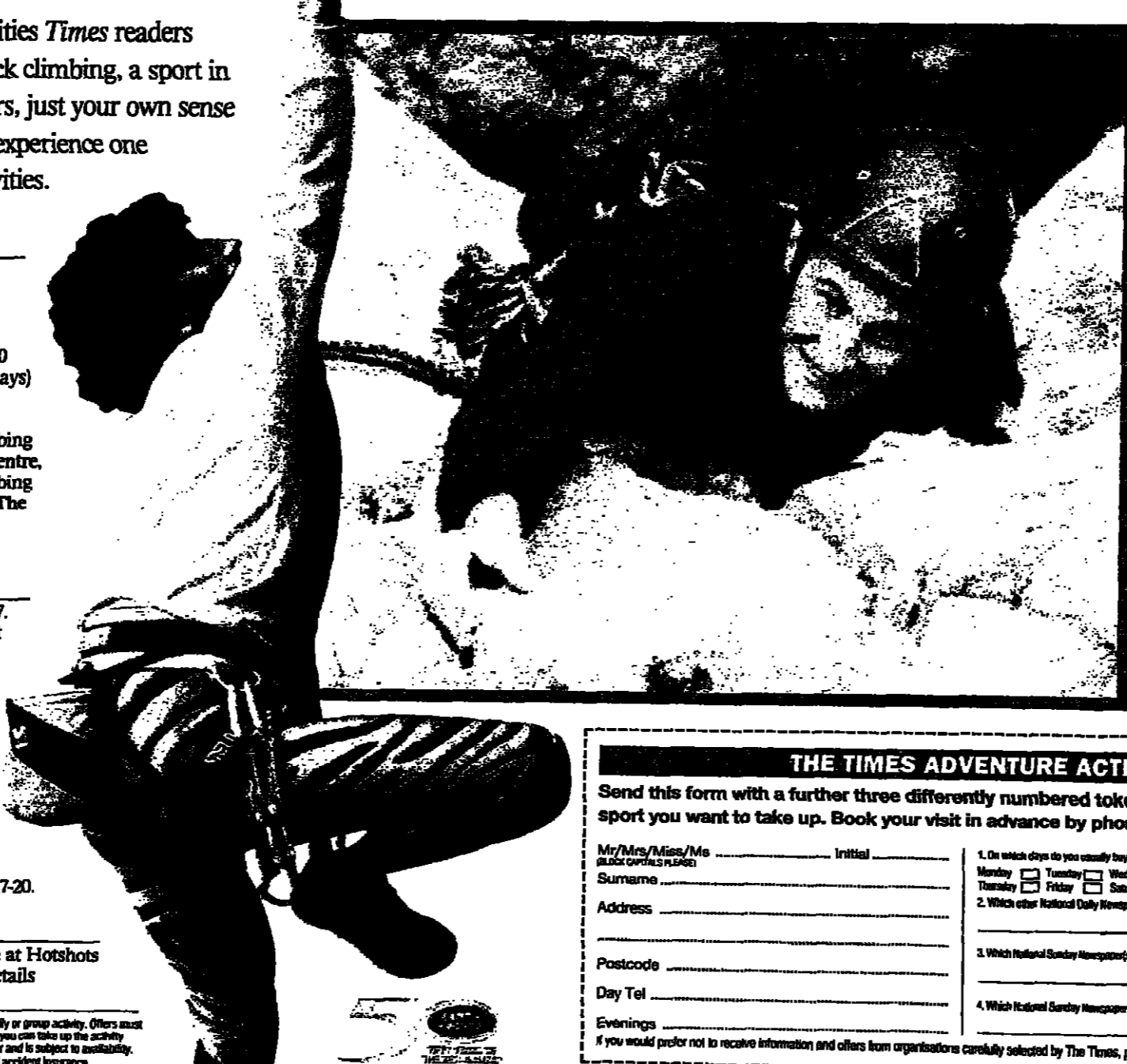
Ethical expression	5/10
Fat-cat quotient	8/10
Financial record	8/10
Share performance	7/10
Attitude to employees	9/10
Strength of brand	9/10
Innovation	7/10
Annual report	7/10
City star rating	7/10
Future prospects	8/10
Total	76/100

Ethical expression is evaluated by Integrity Works. The fat-cat quotient, in which best boardroom pay practice scores highest, is provided by Crisp Consulting.

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THE TIMES ADVENTURE ACTIVITIES
 TOKEN 2

TOMORROW: HANG GLIDING, PARAGLIDING AND MICROLIGHTING, CHANGING TIMES

فكرنا من الأصل

Don't let the slowdown turn into an abrupt halt

One swallow does not make a summer and one weak economic statistic does not make a recession. But we have now had a string of data releases which suggest that the economy is slowing. Yes, I know what professional economists are supposed to say — "don't read too much into one month's figures", or "the future is unusually uncertain". It always is. But markets have to look forward and people and companies have to plan. So, at the risk of ending up with egg all over my face, here goes.

The economy is now set to slow down markedly and the problems of the past two years are about to be replaced by their opposites. Not so long ago, the prevailing worry of policymakers and financial markets was that Britain was in the midst of an unsustainable boom which risked repeating the Lawson experience of the late 1980s. Soon they will worry about whether we are about to slip into recession. Consider the evidence. Over the past few weeks, we have seen soft data on manufacturing output and retail sales, and a slowing of the rate at which unemployment is falling. The growth of average earnings has stabilised. The rate of growth of the money supply, that old faithful of congenial inflation bears everywhere, has slowed decisively. Meanwhile, inflation itself has hovered close to its target of

2.5 per cent, manufacturers are hardly raising their prices at all, while input prices have fallen by 10 per cent over the year.

Last Friday came the coup de grace. In the first quarter of this year, the statisticians tell us, the economy grew by only 0.4 per cent, the slowest since 1995, taking the annual rate down to 2.8 per cent. Moreover, even the service sector, which had previously been extremely buoyant, was also shown to be slowing.

Of course we have learnt to be suspicious of official statistics, so we have to wonder whether these too could be seriously misleading. Yet you can find good reasons for the economy to slow. Over the past year, interest rates have risen by 1.25 percentage points to 7.25 per cent, the highest in the developed world, implying a huge proportionate increase in the interest costs of a loan. Moreover, rates are very high in real terms — about 7 per cent for someone borrowing at 2 per cent over base. Taxes have risen a bit and are set to rise more. By contrast, in real terms, government spending is hardly working at all, and public sector workers now know that the



ROGER BOOTLE

Government is anything but a soft touch over pay. Meanwhile, the effects of last year's £35 billion building society windfalls are fading, and London is threatened with the loss of Far East business in both property and tourism. Most importantly, the level of sterling is up by some 25 per cent over the past 20 months. It has been common to play down the significance of this on the grounds that manufacturing is only about 20 per cent of the economy. But our internationally traded services will also suffer, while a good part of the domestic service sector is directly dependent upon manufacturing. So it is hardly surprising that the economy should be

facing a slowdown. What will prevent it from coming to an abrupt halt? Much will depend upon what happens to the pound and on how the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) reacts. If the pound continues to weaken, this will bring some relief and encourage exporters to hang on to markets and workers. But it may also encourage the MPC to hang on to the current level of interest rates. The hawk on the MPC believe that because the inflation rate has apparently not responded much to the strong pound, domestically generated inflation must be higher than the bare numbers suggest. Accordingly, when the pound stops rising, the true extent of domestic inflationary pressure will be laid bare, and when it falls, there will be an extra external impulse. Yet this may completely misconstrue the effects of the pound's strength. Retailers and the suppliers of imported goods may simply have sat on the consequent rise in their profit margins, partly because they believed that the pound's strength would be temporary. This possibility is backed up by data on the labour market. You could reason-

ably expect labour productivity to be growing by some 2 per cent a year. So in crude terms, the current growth in average earnings of 4.5 per cent would be consistent with inflation of 2.5 per cent — which is exactly the current rate. This gives no support to the idea that domestic inflationary pressures are stronger than the inflation rate itself suggests. On this basis, if the pound were to continue to fall, it might not impart much of an extra inflationary impulse at all. Indeed, if domestic demand were simultaneously weakening, it could be consistent with inflation falling below the target.

In this case, the MPC should be prepared to reduce interest rates with a bump. But will they? Although I am still hoping for a soft landing, there has to be a serious danger that the MPC will drag its feet, with the result that we end up in recession next year. The consequences would be devastating. Unemployment would start to rise, overwhelming the efforts to move people of welfare and into work. Moreover, the Government's own finances could be plunged into deficit soon after the much-trumpeted emergence of a surplus. Inflation would fall sharply, and the MPC would be obliged, belatedly, to drop interest rates. The implication is clear. If interest rates do not come much lower soon, they will come much lower later.

Cable TV flexes its new muscles to take on BT

Raymond Snoddy says the sector can now shed its poor image



On a roll: Cable and Wireless chief Graham Wallace will announce plans today for 200 digital TV channels

Bob Frost, chief executive of the Cable Communications Association (CCA), has never been more optimistic about the future of his industry. "There is a roll here. There is a momentum," he says. Until recently cable has been synonymous with poor marketing, even worse service, chronic stock market underperformance and an inability to meet either financial or subscriber forecasts.

A number of positive factors have come together to ensure that Mr Frost's optimism for the future is less fanciful than before, and his confidence is

symbolised by two unrelated announcements last Thursday. Out of the government policy-making machine came the news that from 2001, BT and other telecommunications groups would be able to compete head-on with the

cable industry in the provision of broadcast entertainment. A few years ago the industry was very worried about such a development and lobbied intensively against any premature liberalisation. Now, a senior cable executive describes the news as "a bit of a damp squib".

The reason is partly that BT's priorities have changed and the national telephone group is more interested in increasing its presence as an Internet service-provider and developing satellite-delivered interactive services such as home shopping and banking rather than turning itself into a surrogate broadcaster.

At the same time, cable feels it is now sufficiently established to compete with anyone — even a giant like BT. Between £7 billion and £8 billion has already been spent on building cable networks. By the year 2001, when the networks should be virtually complete, the total investment will have reached £12 billion, and 17 million homes will be able to subscribe to their services. The industry is installing 20,000 new telephone lines — business as well as residential — a week.

Thursday's second announcement shows just how determined some of the cable companies are to take the battle directly to BT. NTL, the third largest cable group and one of the most innovative, said it is to strike out from its franchise area to offer a national telephone service later this year with cut-price Internet access and, for those wanting it, digital terrestrial television services.

The carrots attached to this monthly-subscription service will include £10 worth of free telephone calls. NTL is able to offer a national service because it has spent £250 million on a network which includes both Scotland and Northern Ireland. Barclay Knapp, the chief executive of NTL, says: "I think we have really hit an inflection point. I am certain that NTL has. We have cracked the code. There is no barrier to us getting 45 to 50 per cent penetration for our services. The fact that they are being replicated is improving performance in other operators."

The industry's average penetration rate for cable tele-

The industry will be ready to exploit any uncertainty about digital television

(ITC) earlier this month in a radical ruling on "bundling" — piling up lots of channels into compulsory packages. Apart from breaking down the large bundles the ITC said it planned to prohibit minimum carriage requirements, which is the practice insisted on by programme channel owners such as BSkyB (in which News Corporation the parent group of The Times has a 40 per cent stake) that all channels be delivered to at least 30 per cent of cable subscribers.

The ITC decided this distorted viewer choice even though some channels may now collapse without the financial protection of being included automatically in big basic bundles. A Latinist at the ITC drew on the words of the Roman dictator Sulla to say of the cable industry: "We have put them in the saddle. Now let's see whether they can ride." It is a challenge that Bob Frost of the CCA is happy to



PEOPLE LIFE NEWS

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A series of two halves

Planet Football Channel Four, 6pm
Now nearly halfway through its run this series is proving invaluable (so I'm assured) when it comes to marking your actual World Cup card. Last week's exoticia in Japan and Korea is tonight replaced by a much chillier trip for the likeable presenters Steve Cram and Simon O'Brien: they are in Scandinavia to see how Norway and Denmark are shaping up. Norway, after all, topped their group undefeated (won 6, drawn 0) and can summon up formidable stars like Frode Sævi, Lars Bohinen of Derby, Oyvind Leonhardsen of Liverpool, and Tore Andre Flo of Chelsea. Denmark, says our man at the sports desk, play "beautiful, cultured football" and were European champions in 1992. Peter Schmeichel of Manchester United is possibly the world's best goalkeeper and Allan Nielsen has gained invaluable experience at Spurs.



Nicholas Lyndhurst stars (BBC1, 8.30pm)

Family Confidential: Lee's Last Chance Channel Five, 8.30pm
On a thirteenth night the story of Lee Paulson and his long-suffering wife, Hana, is better than any soap. Lee is a charming, unashamed womaniser. He considers women as "bonuses - what you get when you make a good sale." (No prizes for guessing Lee's trade). Says his best mate: "I think his behaviour is appalling — he's on the pull 24 hours a day." But there's no stopping Lee's political incoherence. "Women just come to me. I try to keep them alphabetical." Finally, Hana has had enough: "Either Lee stays faithful or I leave. If it weren't for the kids I'd leave now." Then, a twist: when she meets (and slaps) Lee's latest mistress, they end up good friends and Lee, amazed and abashed, takes Hana off to a romantic evening in a restaurant. When they see them, they are in bed eating sausages and eggs.

without causing an even greater crisis in the 1990s. There are some rather touching surprises in this final story — not least Gary's shock when he bumps into someone from his life in the two time zones and must try to alter the course of history to save both of them. Then there's the song he is persuaded to write for Phoebe (Elizabeth Carling). It also has far-reaching repercussions.

Goodnight Sweetheart BBC1, 8.30pm
Part of the joy of this series (aside of some of Nicholas Lyndhurst's finely judged interpretation of the time traveller) has been wondering how his hang-dog character Gary Sparrow can possibly extricate himself from one crisis in the 1940s

Witness: Dr Paisley, I Presume Channel Four, 9pm
Whatever your thoughts on the Belfast Bombs, you may change them when you've seen this documentary about his work as a fire-and-brimstone missionary on his favourite stump-pulling ground — outside Northern Ireland, Westminster and Strasbourg. It's in Cameroon, West Africa, where the Rev, likening himself to another great missionary, Dr Livingstone, "reluctantly" agrees to let journalist Jon Ronson accompany his

Afternoon Play: On The Whole It's Been Jolly Good Radio 4, 2.15pm
Maurice Denham has been performing in radio plays for 60 years so it is appropriate that in this one-person play by Peter Timmiswood he takes the role of Sir Plympton Makepeace (Timmiswood has a Bair for names), who has spent 60 years as an MP. Makepeace is truly an old buffer. He is widely liked, as old buffers usually are, and he gives the general impression of being someone who was born to be at the centre of events. He is also, though less obviously, massively incompetent: he muddles through at best. On the few occasions he did any good it was more or less by accident and his greatest claim to fame is the negative variety he rarely did any actual harm. Peter Barnard

Radio 1
6.30am Chris Moyles 9.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiteley includes 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Mark Radcliffe 4.00 Dave Pearce. Includes 5.45 Newsbeat 6.30 The Evening Session 8.30 Global Update 8.40 Andy Kersey 10.30 Mary Anne Hobbs 1.00am Charlie Jordan 4.00 Dave Warren

Radio 2
6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wake Up to Wogan 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Jimmy Young 1.30pm Debbie Throver 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.05 Johnnie Walker 7.00 Humphrey Lyttelton 8.00 Big Band Special 8.30 Johnnie Walker 8.30 Joe Brown's Good Rockin' Tonight. Includes an interview with Adam Faith, who recalls his Scho coffee bar days 10.30 Richard Allinson 12.00am Steve Madden 3.00 Alex Lester

Radio 5 Live
6.00am The Breakfast Programme 9.00 Nicky Campbell 12.00 Midday with Matt 2.00pm Russco on Five 4.00 Nationwide with Julian Worrick 7.00 News Extra 7.30 The Heart Med. Kenny Burns 8.00 The Monday Match. Commentary from Selhurst Park where Crystal Palace take on Manchester United in the Premiership 10.00 Late Night Live with Nick Robinson 1.00am Up All Night with Gary Robertson 5.00 Morning Reports

Virgin Radio
7.00am Chris Evans 10.00 Russ Williams 1.00pm Paul Coyte 4.00 Sound Shredder 6.45 Ray Cokes 10.00 Mark Forster 2.00am Calvin Jones 5.00 Jeremy Clark 8.00 Jeremy Clark

Talk Radio
6.30am Kirsty Young with Bill Oventon 9.00 Scott Chesholm 12.00 Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tommy Boyd 4.00 Peter Deady 7.00 Anna Richardson 9.00 James White 1.00am Ian Collins 5.00 The Early Show

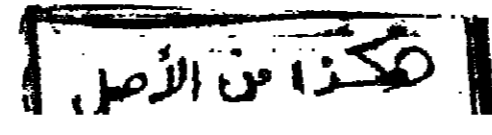
Radio 3
6.00am On Air, with Petroc Trelawny. Includes Mozart (Overpartita in F); Tchaikovsky (Sleeping Beauty, Op. 36); Schubert's Piano Concerto No 2; Liszt's (Stabat Mater); Schubert (Military March in G)
10.30 Artist of the Week: John Lill. All this week, Joan Bakewell meets talks to the pianist
11.00 Sound Shredder. Operatic Heroines — Carmen
12.00pm Composer of the Week: Alexander Borodin
1.00pm The Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert. Live from St John's, Smith Square, London. Mikos Peranyi, cello; Eddy Sals (Salle No 2 in D minor); Kodaly (Cello Sonata)
2.00 The BBC Orchestras. BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Tadaaki Chujo. Martin Roscoe, piano; Sibelius (Finlandia); Britten (Piano Concerto); Sibelius (The Oceanides); Elgar (Symphony No 1 in A flat)
4.00 Sams at the Opera: Flora and Flaura. Jeremy Sams presents a personal selection of operatic delights
4.45 Music Machine, with Verity Sharp
5.00 In Tune. Sean Rafferty talks to the winner of the 1998 Kathleen Ferrier Prize

Radio 4
6.00am Today, with Sue MacGregor and James Naughtie. Includes 6.55, 7.55 Weather 7.25, 8.25 9.00 Start the Week, with the Times columnist Melvyn Bragg and guests
9.45 Sarah's Collapse of St Paul Party. Sir Julian Critchley reads from his political memoirs including his autobiography, A Bag of Boiled Sweets, and Collapse of St Paul Party (1975)
9.45 (LW) Woman's Hour. Martha Kearney talks to Lorna Luft, the daughter of Judy Garland
10.00 News; Huddling Diamonds. A look at Miracle Lodge, a pioneer in the treatment of alcoholism. The addition of eating disorders and co-dependency. Counsellors, nurses, doctors and former patients talk about their experiences
11.30 Eib Under the Sun, by Agatha Christie. With John Hirst and George Baker (45)
12.00 (LW) News Headlines; Shipping Forecast
12.00 (FM) News: You and Yours, with Liz Barclay and John White 12.57 Weather
1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke
1.30 Mastermind. Peter Snow chairs heat four of the year's contest
2.15 News; The Archers (1)
2.15 Afternoon Play: On the Whole It's Been Jolly Good. See Choice
3.00 News; Money Box Live: 0171-890 4444. Vincent Dunne takes callers' calls on personal finance
3.30 Local Motors. Colin Ward meets enthusiasts for locally made cars produced in the early days of motorisation
3.45 One Castlemaine, by Frances Galloway
4.00 News; The Food Programme, with Derek Cooper

World Service
7.00am News 7.15 Beyond the Millennium 7.30 Omnibus 8.00 News 8.15 Of the Shelf 8.30 The Village Chat Show 9.00 News; (845 only) News in German 9.10 Pause for Thought 9.15 Newsweek 10.30 Omnibus 12.10 Newsweek 12.30am Jazzmaster 1.00 News; (845 only) News in German 1.05 World Business Report 1.15 Britain Today 1.30 Seven Days 1.45 Sports Roundup 2.00 Newshour 3.00 News 3.05 Outlook 4.00 Pop Science 4.00 World News 4.05 Sports Roundup 4.15 World Service 4.30 Blue World 4.45 News 5.00 Europe Today 6.00 News 6.15 Insight 6.30 Seven Days; (845 only) News in German 6.45 Sports Roundup 7.00 Newsweek 7.30 Counterpoint 8.00 News 8.01 Outlook 8.25 Pause for Thought 8.30 Multitrack Hit List 9.00 Newshour 10.00 News 10.05 World Business Report 10.15 Britain Today 10.30 Air 11.00 Micky Mouse Music 11.00 Newsweek 11.30 Insight 11.45 Sports Roundup 12.00 News 12.30am Outlook 12.30 Multitrack Hit List 1.00 Newsweek 1.30 Westway 1.45 Britain Today 2.00 Newsweek 2.30 Seven Days 2.45 History Today 3.00 Newsweek 3.30 On Screen 4.00 News 4.05 World Business Report 4.15 Sports Roundup 4.30 The World Today 5.00 The World Today

Classic FM
6.00am Breakfast with Bailey. Nick Bailey presents music to start the morning 8.00 Henry Kelly includes Record of the Week and a chance to hear Michael Barry's recipe for spring onion and tomato soup 12.00 Lunchtime. Includes: Jones presents listeners' favourite music 2.00pm Concerto. Bruch (Violin Concerto No 2 in D minor) 3.00 Michael Mann. Includes Continuous Classics and Afternoon Romance 6.30 Newsnight. Starts updates and the latest highlights 7.00 Smooth Classics at Seven with John Brunning 8.00 Evening Concert. Rachmaninov (Symphony No 1); Albeniz (Swedish Rhapsody No 1); Max Reger (Suite in G minor); Rachmaninov (Symphony No 2 in E minor) 11.00 Martin at Night 2.00am Concerto (1) 3.00 Mark Griffiths

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1, FM 97.8-99.8. RADIO 2, FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3, FM 80.2-82.4. RADIO 4, FM 92.4-94.6. LW 198. MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE, MW 683, 909. WORLD SERVICE, MW 648. LW 198 (1845-5.55am). CLASSIC FM, FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO, FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO, MW 1055, 1061. Television and radio listings compiled by Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.





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Second token for cut-price adventures

BUSINESS

SLOWDOWN 50

Roger Bootle fears an abrupt halt



BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

MONDAY APRIL 27 1998

British Biotech promises statement over new allegations

By PAUL DURMAN

BRITISH BIOTECH, has promised leading shareholders a statement by mid-week after the Stock Exchange reopened its inquiry into share dealings and several allegations were made at the weekend.

The troubled biotech company's attempt to take the initiative comes amid allegations that include: □ Keith McCullagh, chief executive, received a copy of a memo

warning him of the risks of the company's batimastat cancer drug in October 1994 three months before Dr McCullagh sold £600,000 of shares and four months before British Biotech told the stock market about problems with the drug.

□ The Stock Exchange, which has already investigated the controversial timing of the share dealing by Dr McCullagh and two other directors, has reopened its inquiry.

□ James Noble, the finance director who left abruptly last year, quit after a row about share dealings. Mr Noble was angry that John Ralsman, chairman, allowed Dr McCullagh to sell some shares but would not grant him a similar permission.

Shareholders have sought a comprehensive statement of reassurance from the Oxford company. Neil Woodford, a senior fund manager with Perpetual, which

owns a 9.5 per cent stake, said yesterday: "We are expecting a statement by Wednesday." If British Biotech fails to satisfy all the concerns, shareholders may seek a meeting to remove Dr McCullagh and other directors from the board.

Today, *The Times* can reveal the main objections that the European Medicines Evaluation Agency raised last May to granting marketing approval to Zactux, British Biotech's pancreatitis drug. The

EMA said: "There is insufficient evidence of efficacy since a reduction of mortality in (sic) only demonstrated in subgroup analysis." It was also concerned about the quality of the data because of changes and "non-adherence" to the original drug trial design. "This uncertainty with regard to the validity of the data severely hampers the assessment of efficacy," it said.

It also said part of the analysis "seems not valid due both to the differences in design, [inclusion] and exclusion criteria, changes in drug formulation, and different schedules for data sampling." In all, the EMA made five key objections. British Biotech told the market that the EMA would not approve the drug this year only in February.

The October 1994 memo, which has been seen by *The Times*, said patients taking part in trials

"should be informed that there is a risk of gastro-intestinal obstruction". It was the seriousness of this issue that eventually led to the suspension of the batimastat trial in January 1995.

The Stock Exchange and the company declined to confirm that the Exchange had reopened its inquiries, but David Simpson, a company spokesman, said: "It would be bloody weird if they weren't [investigating]."

DTI wanted to withhold letter in Astra case

By FRASER NELSON

THE Government sought to withhold an official document in its attempt to prosecute four former directors of Astra, the collapsed armaments company involved in the Jonathan Aitken arms-to-Iran scandal.

The attempt to disqualify Gerald James, John Anderson, Christopher Gumbley and James Miller as company directors collapsed after the court refused to allow tactics employed by the Department of Trade and Industry.

The four had been pursued by the DTI since 1994, after Astra was found to have supplied weapon parts to Iran in 1988 in direct defiance of a government embargo. Mr Aitken, then a backbench Tory MP, was a non-executive director of the company.

The Times has learnt that the DTI tried to stop the court examining a letter, written by its own investigators three years ago, which recommended that only Mr Anderson should be disqualified as a director.

As recently as November the DTI argued that the letter was not part of an unofficial report and was therefore "irrelevant and inadmissible". It was ordered to surrender the letter and three months afterwards the court asked the DTI

to drop the case altogether. Two weeks ago, it agreed.

The Astra case has parallels with the Matrix Churchill affair in which the previous Government used gagging orders known as public interest immunity certificates to seek the conviction of Matrix directors. Matrix Churchill, like Astra, was involved in supplying the Iraqi supergun project.

Margaret Beckett, President of the Board of Trade, said that the letter — far from being irrelevant — had persuaded her to halt proceedings.

She said: "I have carefully considered the information contained in... the letter from the inspectors with their view that only one of the directors should face disqualification. While the Companies Act does not oblige me to have regard to the views set out in that letter, I find their views persuasive."

The DTI said it did not try to conceal the letter, merely to prevent its use as evidence. It said: "We drew specific attention to the letter, but said in our opinion it was inadmissible and irrelevant. We asked the judge to decide. There was no cover-up." It wanted the court to inspect a 550-page report, written by the same inspectors, which was highly critical of Astra as a company. The case was due on May 5.

Mr James has long maintained that the DTI was launching a smear campaign against him. He said at the time: "If the truth came out, Astra would make Matrix Churchill look like a Sunday school outing."

Mr Gumbley, former managing director of Astra, has already been jailed for nine months for corruptly giving a BMW car to a Ministry of Defence official. Mr Anderson is 63 and has made it clear he has no intention of running another company.

In the 1980s, Mr James, a former merchant banker, built Astra into a diversified group with interests ranging from fireworks to defence. In 1988 it bought BMARC, a Cranham company that had a deal to supply weapon parts which ended up in Iran.

Separately Astra's Belgian division was found to have a contract to supply propellant destined for Saddam Hussein's "supergun" in the Gulf War. Matrix Churchill was found to have contracts connected to the same project.

Mr Aitken said he attended only three board meetings while he was a non-executive director of Astra, and knew nothing of any deal to supply arms to Iran. Astra collapsed under heavy debts in 1992.



What's cooking?: capitalism will sweep into the deeply conservative world of French cuisine next month when the country's biggest traditional restaurant chain, the Groupe Flo, is floated on the Paris Bourse on May 6 (Adam Sage writes). Flo's founder, Jean-Paul Bucher, wants to sell a 23 per cent tranche of the Fr150 million business which includes La Coupole, the Paris brasserie pictured above, and the Café Flo chain in the UK

New VW Rolls offer to spark Vickers revolt

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

VOLKSWAGEN is hoping to provoke a shareholder revolt at Vickers by informally offering up to £500 million for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars, which Vickers' board has already provisionally agreed to sell to BMW.

VW's supervisory board gave permission at a specially convened meeting this weekend to Ferdinand Piech, chief executive, to sweeten its earlier £370 million offer for the company, which makes both

Rolls-Royce and Bentley cars. VW refused to say how much it would be willing to pay, but German reports said that Herr Piech had been told he could spend up to DM15 billion (£500 million) on the deal. "He has been given considerable firepower," a VW spokesman said.

VW, which has appointed Panmure Gordon as its stockbroker in London to help present the case to Vickers shareholders, had a Rolls-

Royce Silver Seraph flown to Wolfsburg in Lower Saxony, where the board was meeting, so that its members could take a look at it and decide whether to press on with the attempt to wrest the British company from its Bavarian rival's grip.

At the end of March, Vickers gave BMW preliminary acceptance of its £340 million bid, which is worth an underlying £365 million, and set a 30-day period of exclusive talks. This ends on Thursday.

On Wednesday Vickers said its annual meeting, at which shareholders will have an opportunity to quiz board members about the Rolls sale. However, it is thought possible that Vickers will announce details of the BMW deal either at its AGM or before, thus heading off the need to open up talks with VW. Vickers shareholders would still have to approve a deal, however, at an extraordinary meeting in June.

Both BMW and Rolls-Royce said yesterday that they expect their deal to be clinched soon. Graham Morris, chief executive of Rolls-Royce Motors, said he could see no reason for the deal to go wrong, while BMW said it remained confident that its deal was the most attractive.

Mr Morris also revealed demand for the Silver Seraph, which was launched last year, is exceeding expectations, with 350 orders received.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 1390

ACROSS
1 Mock; supply (to hotel room) (4,2)
5 Fruit; Peter..., mechanical (MIND) (6)
8 Piece of computer; wood shaving (4)
9 Dampness (8)
10 Referee (6)
12 Smell strongly (4)
15 Crossing-place to execution (Venice) (6,2,5)
16 March tiredly; hit wildly (4)
17 Not illegal (6)
19 Height (8)
21 Fibre; old invading German (4)

DOWN
2 One from Nairobi (6)
3 Long, angry speech (6)
4 Short-lived (9)
6 Drop; pickpocket (3)
7 Treated luxuriously (3)
8 Q-and-A game (4)
9 Meeting for job applicant (9)
11 Motor vehicle (3)
12 Minor humiliation (9)
13 Tired out; spent (9)
14 Well off (8)
18 Disaster; bankruptcy (4)
20 Film; relax (3)
21 Judder; container (3)

Siemens in talks to handle baggage at Heathrow

By CARL MORTSHED, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

BAA, the airports operator, is in discussions with Siemens over a possible transfer of its baggage-handling activities at Heathrow to the German electronics company.

The preliminary talks involve Siemens Business Services, the outsourcing arm of the company which is keen to expand its business into airports, following successful PFI deals with the Government.

The talks are thought to involve Siemens taking over responsibility for running the baggage-handling equipment, manning the operation, and charging BAA a fee for each case handled on the system.

The system broke down and lost luggage turned into a whose-fault dispute between BAA and its principal customer, British Airways. Some 10,000 pieces of luggage went astray, including a groom's wedding outfit, and BAA was forced to compensate the airline.

The airports group is under pressure to resolve overcrowding at Heathrow which has put strain on the system and is set to get worse because of burgeoning traffic and the lengthy delays over the possible future of a fifth terminal. A new baggage handling system was recently installed at Terminal 1 but problems with the system erupted in August.

The German company sees airports as a potential growth area for outsourcing deals. The company is already involved in a consortium which is building an airport at Lahore in Pakistan. At the same time it is bidding for build, operate and transfer contracts over airport terminals in Turkey and Bulgaria.

Siemens is beginning to take equity stakes in projects. It is already using its huge balance sheet to back investments in rail transport and power generation but the company is also developing its outsourcing arm in information technology.

The company has contracts with the Home Office to handle immigration applications and has been involved in PFI hospital contracts.

Midshires faces RBS deal anger

By ANNE ASHWORTH

THE management of Birmingham Midshires Building Society is expected to be attacked by members at this week's annual meeting over its failure to free itself from the £630 million agreed

bid from the Royal Bank of Scotland. In spite of rumours that the society was close to a deal releasing it from an exclusivity agreement binding it to the bid, both parties yesterday

denied that substantial progress had been made. A Birmingham Midshires spokesman said: "At our meeting our chairman will update our members on developments."

■ **Tomorrow**
Alasdair Murray, right, looks at the issues that link profits and politicians

■ **Wednesday**
How is Sears shaping up now that it has shed its shoes?

■ **Thursday**
A new generation of railway hotels could be emerging. We take a look at the plans

■ **Friday**
Anatole Kaletsky gives his economic view



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